Memoirs of Vidocq, Written by Himself. Tr. [By H.T. Riley]. [With Plates, Cm.16].

Eugène François Vidocq

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Eugene Fran##ois Vidocq

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MEMOIRS

OF

VIDOCQ,

PRINCIPAL AGENT OF THE FRENCH POLICE

UNTIL 1817;

AND NOW PROPRIETOR OF

THE PAPER MANUFACTORY AT ST. MANDÉ.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

La profession de voleur n'existerait pas, en tant que profession, si les malheureux contre lesquels la justice a sévi une fois n'étaient pas honnis, vilipendés, maltraités; la société les contraint à se rassembler: elle crée leur réunion, leurs mœurs, leur volonté et leur force.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:

WHITTAKER, TREACHER, AND ARNOT,

AVE-MARIA-LANE.

MDCCCXXIX.

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Thieves form three great categories or classes, in which may be found many divisions and subdivisions.

To the first of these categories belong thieves by profession, who are reputed incorrigible, although the almost perpetual efficacy of the system which the North Americans adopt towards their prisoners, proves that there is no rogue so hardened but that he may be brought to repentance and an honest mode of life.

A life of constant crime is ordinarily the result of a first fault; impunity encourages and incites, and punishment does not correct nor divert it. Impunity may long favour the criminal, but sooner or later it has its termination. Happy would it be, thrice happy, if punishment (whatever be the nature of the crime) did

not leave behind an indelible brand of disgrace. But our European societies are so organized that inexperience has every means and temptation to become perverted. Does it succumb? Justice is at work. Justice! rather legislation. It strikes the blow, and whom does it strike? The poor, the ignorant, the unfortunate, to whom the bread of education has been denied; him in whom no moral principle has been inculcated;—him to whom the law has not been promulgated;—him who could have no rules of conduct but those lessons of a catechism so soon forgotten, because the child did not understand it, and the man only finds in it, beneath a mass of religious ceremonies, and formulæ too little explained to be put in practice. Let us not be deceived: in spite of the diffusion of light, the education of the people is not yet completed, it is still to do. Science is abroad, but she walks alone; she advances for the privileged classes; she progresses for the rich. She illumines only the upper regions, the lower are still in darkness; the poor go on hap-hazard and blindly: woe to him who errs and mistakes the right road! At each step there are abysses, gulphs, barrier-obstacles, so much the worse! They have not the benefit of a beacon to guide them. Find out your road, ye poor and humble! if you do not find the proper one, your lives are the forfeiture.

Have you wandered from the line? would you retrace your steps? do you wish to do so in all sincerity and earnestness? Vain desire—your lives are forfeited—so wills the prejudiced. You are outcasts; you are incorrigible; Parias; hope is no longer yours. The society which condemns you, which excommunicates you, has uttered its anathema against you. The judge has sentenced you, and you shall have no more bread.

When the expiation is indefinite, why speak of temporary punishment? The tribunal inflicts a punishment, the duration of this chastisement is fixed; but when the sentence ceases to be in force, opinion still exists, and always strikes, right or wrong, right and left,

The sentence of the law decrees that six months of a man's life, six months of his liberty shall be sacrificed, opinion annihilates all the rest. Oh! ye who pronounce sentence, tremble! the sword of Themis inflicts incurable wounds only: her blows, even when lightest, are like the eating canker which destroys all, like the Greek fire which consumes, but cannot be extinguished.

Our codes establish correctional punishments, and the worst of all criminals are not those who deserve punishment, but those who have undergone the law's chastisement. How is it that we go on in a mode inverse to our aim? It is because to ill use is not to correct, but contrariwise to pervert and corrupt more and more weak human nature; it is to compel it to become degraded, brutalized. I have seen criminals after they have been freed from every sort of imprisonment. I have seen thousands, but have never known one who, during his captivity, had formed determinations or found inducements to reform and lead a better life. Did they propose to amend? It was always from other and more powerful reasons; the remembrance of captivity only aroused a feeling of irritation, spite, rage; a vague resentment, deep and without repentance. They recalled to memory the rapacious porters, the ferocious jailers, the still more savage turnkeys: they remembered the iniquities, the tyrannies, the tyrants, or rather the tigers, and will they tell us that these men are also made in the image of God? It is downright blasphemy!

The freed prisoner, who proposes to maintain himself by honesty, must have more than common virtue; he must have heroism, and even then what security has he, if he possess nothing, that the whole world will not shrink from him? he is a pestiferous being, a leper which society avoids and shuns. Does it fear contagion? no, contagion is everywhere, at the Bagne as well as under the gilded ceilings of the Chaussée d'Antin; it is pity that they dread, and they seize with eagerness a plausible excuse to avoid it.

Since the liberated prisoner is irrevocably pro-

scribed, if he has not the courage to perish, it is necessary that he take refuge somewhere; an interdict is laid on his return to your society, you repulse him, and whither can he betake himself? Into his own, and his own is the enemy of yours. It is you then who increase the number of malefactors: for the principle of all society is mutually to assist each other. His peers will first extend to him the hand of succour, but if they nourish him to-day, it is on condition that to-morrow he will rob you. It is you who have reduced him to this extremity; do not complain, do not pity yourselves, but if you retain any good feeling, pity him.

The business of a thief would not exist, not as a profession certainly, if the unhappy creatures against whom justice has directed her power once, were not disgraced, vilipended, ill-used; society compels them to herd together; she constrains their re-union, their manners, their will, and their power.

Let it not be thought that this thrusting out, this exclusion of the freed convict is the result of a delicacy of conventional feeling; this system is but the consequence of hypocrisy. Is the liberated man rich? All the world receives him with open arms; there is no door that is not open to him; he is received everywhere. *Roberto credite experte.* I can speak from positive knowledge. If he have a good table, and particularly a well stocked cellar, he may calculate amongst his guests magistrates, bankers, money-brokers, counsellors, notaries: they will not blush to appear with him in public; they will call him their friend, he will be their very good associate and companion, and the commissary, with hat in hand, will not deem it a dishonour to take him by the hand, quite the reverse.

The second class of robbers consists of a multitude of weak creatures, who, placed on a rapid declivity, between their passions and their wants, have not the power of resisting those dangerous seductions that beset them and lure them on to ruin by bad example. It is, for the most part, amongst gamblers, that recruits are found to fill up

this distressing list, the members of which are on the high way that leads to the scaffold. A crown thrown of the green table is the overt act for him who does so; circumstances follow, he is compelled to become a forger, thief, assassin, parricide; those who authorize gambling are accomplices and provokers to crime: the blood of the infatuated being, and that which he sheds, is on your head.

The individuals who range themselves in the third class are the necessitous, whom misery alone has rendered guilty. Society ought to be indulgent towards them. The whole, with very few exceptions, only ask to be at peace with the laws; but formerly it was indispensable that they should be at peace with their stomach. Population is certainly too much narrowed, or rather those who have the means are too egotistical as to their appetite.

Should not punishment be graduated by necessity, in proportion to the greater or inferior understanding of the delinquent, in proportion to his situation? The extent of his intellect, his abilities, cultivated or not, and a crowd of other powerful motives which always more or less destroy the free action of what comes afterwards; —should they not be taken into consideration? Punishments are proportioned to crimes: true, but the same crime is atrocious or excusable according as it is committed by a doctor of law, or a wild rustic of Basse-Bretagne.

In a state of civilization with which we are not all equally sharers, laws, that they may not be unjust in their application, should be made like the soldiers' dress, of three sizes, with a great latitude to the judges' discretion to decide according to the circumstances of the case.

Thieves by profession are all those who, voluntarily or not, have contracted a habit of appropriating to themselves the property of another: they have but one word, one thought—plunder. This class includes from the pickpocket to the highway robber; from the usurer

to the dealer who deals in a palace, in the provisions of an army.

We will not mention those who are not accused. The others form ten or twelve quite distinct species without counting the varieties; then come the passers from city to city. As to the object they propose to themselves, thieves are everywhere pretty generally alike: but it is not everywhere that they operate similarly, they progress with the age they live in. Cartouche now would only be a daring fellow, (*ganache renforcée,*) and Coignard out of the Bagne would pass for an active light-horseman (*voltigeur*). The moving world has not, to my knowledge, an academy, but yet possesses, like the literary world its classics and romances; the scheme which formerly was "deep and knowing" is now but a poor device. The purse covered with bells, whence the *tatler* was to be *prigged* without one of the bells sounding, this purse, which to our ancestors seemed a trial so ingenious and dexterous, this purse is as Corneille, as Racine, as Voltaire—*Rococo!!!*

It is to the living that our moderns address themselves; it is in nature that they make their first essays. At their very first debût they do some master-stroke; in their estimation the ancients are as if they had never been. There are no more models, no more copies, no more routes traced out, no one imitates. The contest is, who shall strike out for himself some novel mode of proceeding. However, he is in a circle in which the originals themselves must move. I have observed them, I have seen their point of departure, I know how they go, and whatever may be their evolutions or their genius, all the sinuosities of their progress are known to me beforehand. Through the thousand and one transformations which are produced daily by the necessity of escaping a searching surveillance, I have been able to distinguish the character proper to each species; the physiognomy, language, habits, manners, dress, arrangement, and details; I have studied all, remembered all: and if an individual pass before me, if he be

a robber by profession, I will point him out, I will even tell his line of business. Frequently from the inspection of a single article of clothing I would more quickly describe a thief from head to heel than our celebrated Cuvier, with two maxillaries and half-a-dozen vertebræ, can distinguish an antidiluvian animal or a fossil man. There is in the garb of a rogue hieroglyphics which can be decyphered with more certainty than those of which M. de Figeac boasts of having given as the interpretation *ad aperturam libri*. There are equally in manners tokens which are by no means equivocal;—I ask pardon of Lavater as well as of the renowned doctors Gall and Spurzheim, in fact of all physiognomists or phrenologists, past, present, and to come; for, in the monography that I am about to trace, I shall not heed the irregularities of countenance, nor frontal protuberances, nor occipital bumps: the indications I shall furnish will be more precise, and certainly more ascertained and positive, guarding carefully against that spirit in the system which only generates errors. A good toxicology is not based on hypotheses: see that of M. Orfila. We do not play with poisons; and when we desire to have a sure way of distinguishing between good and bad mushrooms, between the poisonous species and those which are not so, we must have proofs of an evidence so constant and palpable, that no person can mistake. That we may find a support in comparison, I quote the learned Doctor Rocques, whose excellent work on this subject is so justly estimated.

Since by this series of approximatives which the reader doubtless did not anticipate, I have reached the confines of natural history, I am not sorry of the coincidence to declare that it is only by my method that I have undertaken to class thieves. During my search a work fell into my hands, with pictures, and for men as well as children illustrations have attractions. Whilst the commissary was actively engaged in discovering a pamphlet, (one, I think, by Paul Louis Courier,) I was amusing myself with the prints it contained. The

book which afforded me this innocent amusement, was a *Monacologie* or *Monacographie*, in which all the orders of monks and nuns were classed and described after the system of Linnæus. The idea was ingenious: I confess that it made me smile, and afterwards when thinking of drawing up a classification of thieves, I was almost tempted to make a profit of it; but when I reflected again, I was soon convinced that there would be a great deal too much to do to detect in a robber the stamina, petals, pistils, corolla, capsules: certainly with a little stretch of imagination we can see all that is written down so humorously; to make it appear, in spite of the phantasmagoria and conjurations of Cagliostro, is entirely another thing!—The capsules of a Minor friar and the pistil of a visiting nun may be imagined without much effort. But although robbers propagate their species, and increase and multiply one amongst the other according to the commandment, they increase and multiply no more nor less than plants and animals; as it is not that which essentially distinguishes them, I must renounce the Linnean system, and resolve to state only my plain and simple remarks, without troubling myself by inquiring if it would be more advantageous to arrange them very learnedly by adapting to the individuals who are the subject of it the more recent denominations of zoology.

Perhaps in considering the treatise of *Monstrosities* of M. Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, I might contrive to engraft my mode on his; but the analogy between monstrosities, with which both of us are occupied, have not appeared to me sufficiently striking to induce me to take the trouble of consulting him. Besides, who dares affirm that the inclination to rob is an anomaly?—and granting that it is urgent to repress it, it is still a question of inquiry, if it be not instinct. This is not all. Morality and physics do not always dovetail: when the latter is right, the former wrong, and *vice versâ*, would it not be an extravagance to wish to establish parallels?

I am not one of those who recede from innovation; but in offering a nomenclature of thieves, I act conformably to ancient usage. I have preserved to them the denominations under which they are known to one another and to the police, since Paris has been sufficiently vast and populated for all species and varieties to be able to work simultaneously in its circle. I have been counselled to give, *ex professo*, a nomenclature of my own, with a terminology either Greek or Latin. I should then have trodden in the steps of Lavoisier and Fourcroi; it would have been a path to celebrity; but all that would have been only Hebrew for the common. What do I mean by Hebrew? What ails my head? I was not thinking of the Jews; it is a mother-tongue this said Hebrew. On consideration, Hebrew would have done, and Greek also; there are great Greeks amongst thieves; so there are every where! However, if it had done me no other service, to call the *Cambrioleurs*, for instance, *Saladomates* (house-breakers), the the *Floueurs*, *Balantiotomistes* (cutpurses), I might have passed for a Hellenist. The late M. Gail would not have been a greater than I, by good fortune! But even then, if I had, like the great chemist, analyzed, or caused to be analyzed, one of these gentlemen, would any person have been the wiser, because, aping Messrs. Gay-Lussac and Thenard, I should have said thus:—a cambrioleur is composed, sinking evaporated atoms, of 53.360 of carbon, 19.685 of oxygen, 7.021 of hydrogen, 19.934 of azote, so much gelatine, albumen, osmazome, &c. Good heavens!—let us not go look for noon at two o'clock in the afternoon; and, without caring for reputation, let us not use words that signify nothing; let us call things by their right names. I have found the thieves already christened: I will not be their godfather. It is sufficient for me to be their historiographer.

It is not long since I was visited by a learned personage. A learned personage!—and why not? Have not I entered on a literary career? Since I commenced

the publication of my Memoirs, I have been visited by grammarians even, who have offered to teach me French, on condition that I would teach them *slang*. Perhaps they were philologists? Be that as it may; the learned gentleman came to my house. What did he want? We shall see.

He accosted me: "Are you M. Vidocq?"

"Yes, sir. What can I do for you?"

"I have made a valuable discovery, which must interest you very much."

"What may it be, sir?"

"A book, sir—the first, the most useful of books for you; and which, in duties so painful as those you have fulfilled, would have saved you infinite trouble."

"This is mustard after dinner."

"It comes somewhat late I own; but then it has not seen light these fifty years."

"And who has kept it so long under a bushel?"

"Who? do you ask!—the most terrible of our bookworms, the late M. Boulard. He used to carry old books about in his pockets, which were as long and as large as a hearse. He invented the pockets à la Boulard. Ten houses, which he had in Paris, were like the cemeteries of the dead, in which all that fell into his hands were pitilessly interred."

"What an amateur of burials!"

"Ah, sir, it were time he died! What treasures he had withdrawn from the world!—what unique copies did he keep in his hidden stores! This one also is unique; it is not without some difficulty that I have exhumed it; but at last I have succeeded, and here it is—a small tome: *De famosis Latronibus*. Merlin and Renouard bid for it like madmen; but I was at the sale; I was there, and headed them. It is now mine! I have it in quarto, as you see. It is thus entitled, *De famosis Latronibus investigandis*, à Godefrido *. This Godefroid was a knowing person-

* Concerning the finding out of famous Robbers, by Godefrid.

age!—he knew them all, sir! Ah! it was a nice business for him to smell out a thief! It is in this learned treatise that he has noted down the fruits of his labours. Your successor, M. Lacour, would give the world to know his secret!—But it is yours; to you alone that I will pay due homage; and I have come expressly to Saint Maudé to offer it to you!"

"I accept it, sir, and thank you much. But would you be so kind as to inform me who this Godefroid was?"

"Who he was! Doctor *in utroque*, contemporary with the illustrious Pie de la Mirandole, and professor of judicial astrology in the most distinguished universities of Germany; judge whether or no he was capable of writing!"

"These are high sounding titles, certainly, and very honourable, but was he ever at the gallies?"

"No: but that did not prevent him from knowing every robber from the time of Eve, who stole the apple, to the rogue, Ti—ta—pa—pruff, who cribbed the carbuncle of the prophet; there was not a thief whose prowess and deeds he had not at his fingers' ends."

"And he related them to his scholars, this pedagague?"

"Related them, certainly: one must be very potent when possessing all the experience of past ages."

"Your Godefroid appears to me to have been only an amateur; besides, if it were not abusing your complaisance, I would beg you to translate me some portions of the admirable treatise *De famosis*."

"Willingly, my dear sir, very willingly. *Teneo lupum auribus*, I have the wolf by the ears. You will be satisfied, ravished, astonished."

"We shall soon see."

We seated ourselves on a bench at the entrance of my sitting room. I silenced my dogs who were barking, and the "learned pundit," began his version, and I paid the utmost attention.

At first it was necessary to listen to the *curriculum*

vitæ of all the mythological *prigs*, Mercury, Polyphemus, Cacus; then came the heroic period, filled with robbers and robberies; these carried off the treasures of Diana of Ephesus, the flocks of this person, the heifer of that, and the horse of another. Then, in the midst of a deluge of quotations, were enumerated all the larcenies mentioned in Genesis; the Medes, the Assyrians, the Romans, the Carthaginians, appeared by turns on the scene of action in due order as chronology allowed of it. When I saw that there never would be an end of this I interrupted the translator.—

"Enough, enough," said I.

"No, no, *par Dieu*, you must hear this. Here is a dissertation of a very curious nature; it relates to the two thieves between whom Jesus Christ was crucified."

The author was making a research as to what might be their names.

"But what avails their names?"

"Ah, sir! when we turn to the past, there is no small research. Do you know that if they could contrive to learn the name of one of the two, of the good one for instance, it would create a great commotion at Rome; for he is, of course, in heaven, the Saviour has told us. There would be a canonization, an upsetting of the legend, a revolution in the calendar, the pope would never have canonized with greater certainty; he would have the word of him whom he represents; what work! it would be infallible this time."

"All this is possible; but I will tell you frankly that I care not a straw about it."

"Ah! I see it; the historical part fatigues you; you are a man of deeds, M. Vidocq; let us pass to the practical part."

"Yes, let us pass to the practical part, here I expect much."

"You will be content with him."

"What says your doctor?"

"I have it here; attention. 'If you have been robbed, and would really desire to discover the author

of your loss, begin by consulting your planet; remember under what star you were born; in which of his twelve houses the sun has just entered; examine at what point of the zodiac he was *in hora natali;* if it were under the sign of the Scales, it is good: there is justice to be had, the thief will be hanged without remission. Then you must have observed the conjunction of Mars and Venus, the state of the sky has so much influence over our destinies; observe the position of Mercury at the precise hour when you came into the world; the hour when you first remarked that you had been robbed; calculate, compare, follow Mercury, do not lose sight of him, it is he who carries off what you have lost; if you cannot stop him, take the rosary of a patient who died in a fit of laughter, cross yourself seven times, recite on the cord five *Paters* and three *Aves*, and finish with a *Credo*, which you must say without a pause, from beginning to end, without taking breath: faith is necessary; after that, drink fasting a large glass of water.'"

"Yes, believe and drink, of course; but, learned sir, your famous treatise *De famosis* is but a collection of ridiculous idle stories."

"What, sir, idle stories! the author gives his authorities, fifty pages of names, at the end of the book, poets, orators, historians, polygraphs."

"Does he also mention the spies?"

"He speaks of Argus and Briareus. I hope that the one was a famous agent of police, with his hundred eyes! and the other, with his hundred arms,—what a gendarme!"

The pundit was infatuated with his acquisition, and whatever I said to prove that his book was a tissue of nonsense and absurdity, he went away perfectly convinced that he had made me a very valuable present, but that, from vanity, I would not allow its value.

I am sure that, in his estimation, Godefroid far outweighed Vidocq, and yet all the knowledge of the ancient worthy whose lessons he proposed to me were limited to superstitious ceremonies. Faith was neces-

sary as to the disciples of M. Cousin; faith is still alive, very lively and robust! After the burning of the Bazaar Boufflers, did I not see a nosegay of violets on the walls, to discover whether or not the premises had been wilfully set on fire? if there had been malice in the case, the nosegay would catch fire the moment it was presented to the place where the fire had commenced; some witnesses *saw the flame*, the nosegay was consumed; the fact is authenticated,—it was like the apparition of the cross of Migné.

The pope, cardinals, bishops, archbishops, God himself uniting with the philosophers of the age, would not extirpate credulity; the Prince of Hohenlohe would still perform miracles, there would be still conjurers, they would still cast nativities, consult coffee-grounds, whites of eggs, dreams, signs, marks, sounds, and wonders. Old Mother Lenormand, Mad. Mathurin, Fortuné, and all the sorcerers and sorceresses of Paris, the magnetisers inclusive, would not be the less resorted to, whenever a robbery was committed, and most frequently before any declaration had been made to the police. What is the consequence? Whilst they have recourse to supernatural means, the stolen property is lost past recovery; the thief has had time to take all precautions to avoid detection, and when, after having exhausted the resources of magic and divination, they present themselves at the office, in the little Rue Sainte Anne, to invoke the ministry and aid of the "Chef de la Sûreté," as there is no trace of the misdemeanour, the investigation is fruitless, and the plunderer is the only one who can apply, whilst laughing in his sleeve, that favourite proverb of the weak and silly, "*Faith alone can save us.*"

If the multitude had a little more confidence in my reliques, than in those of my successor, it was that I was sometimes incomprehensible to them. On how many occasions have I not overwhelmed with amazement the persons who came to complain of any robbery! Scarcely had they related two or three circumstances, when I was immediately in possession of the whole

facts; I concluded their story; or without waiting for more explanations, I said, "*the thief is so and so.*" They were thunderstruck; were they grateful? I think not, for generally the complainant remained persuaded either that I had committed the robbery, or that I had made a compact with the devil. Such was the belief of my worthy applicants, that they could not suppose my information derived from any other sources. The opinion that I was an *operative*, or rather the instigator, of a great many robberies, was most general and widely extended. They asserted that I was in direct relation with the most expert thieves in Paris; that I had my information from them beforehand of the robberies they contemplated; and that if they had been prevented from informing me previously, for fear of losing a good opportunity, they did not fail, after a successful operation, to give me a share of the spoil.

They added, that I was associated in the profits of their industry, and only allowed them to be apprehended at the moment when their activity was no longer productive to me. They were, it must be confessed, admirable fellows, thus to sacrifice to a man who, sooner or later, would give them up to justice! But there is no excess of absurdity which is not imagined in this nether world; but as in the most absurd idea there may be a faint idea of truth, this brings us to the point whence we started. Interested, from duty, to know, as well as possible, all the professed thieves, male and female, I endeavoured to be informed exactly as to the state of their finances, and if I learned that an advantageous change had occurred place in their affairs, I naturally concluded that they had been levying a tax somewhere. If the amelioration of their condition accorded with any notice left at the office, the conclusion was more probable still. Still it was but conjecture; but I had an account rendered to me of the smallest particular that could in any way enlighten me on the method of execution adopted to consummate the crime. I went to the place myself, and frequently,

before any search was commenced, I said to the party aggrieved, "Be still, I am sure of discovering the plunderers, as well as their booty." The following fact, the only one I will adduce, will prove this:—

Monsieur Prunaud, a dealer in curiosities and fashionable trinkets, in the Rue Saint Denis, had been robbed during the night. They had effected an entrance by force into his warehouse, whence they had carried off fifty pieces of India muslin, and many valuable shawls. The next morning M. Prunaud came in haste to my office, and had not finished the account of his loss, when I named to him the authors of it: "It can only have been done," said I, "by *Berthe*, *Mongadurt*, and their gang."

I instantly set my agents to work, to whom I gave orders to learn if they were spending money in a lavish manner. A few hours afterwards they came to tell me that the two individuals on whom my suspicions had fallen had been met at a notorious place, in company with *Toulouse* and *Riveraud*, alias *Morosini*; that they were newly dressed, and that, by all appearance, they had full pockets, as they had been seen in company with some girls. I knew who was their *fence*, ordered that a search should be made at his house, and the property was discovered. The fence could not avoid his fate—he was sent to the gallies. As for the thieves, that they might be brought to trial, it was necessary to obtain evidence by means of a stratagem of my concoction, which succeeding, they were apprehended and convicted.

To be at the height of my employment, it was absolutely necessary that I should be able to conjecture with some justice; frequently I was so sure of my men, that I not only gave their names and residences offhand, but I detailed their precise mode of action, and indicated the way in which they had proceeded to complete the robbery. The vulgar, who are ignorant of the resources of the police, cannot conceive how any one can be innocent, and yet have so much perspicuity.

For those who never reflect, the illusion is such that, without the least malevolence towards me, it was probable to suppose a connivance and understanding which did not exist; but a good half of the inhabitants of Paris believed that I had the gift of seeing every thing, hearing every thing, of knowing every thing: and it is not exaggeration to say that I was, in their eyes, like the Solitary, and therefore they invoked my assistance on every emergency, and three-fourths of the times in matters concerning which it was impossible that I could afford them the least assistance. No idea can be formed of the whimsical and ridiculous requests and statements which were sent to me. It would be necessary to be present at one of those audiences, during which the public were admitted into the Bureau de Sûreté. A countryman enters.

"Sir, I was walking in the Jardin des Plantes, and whilst I was a-looking at the beastes, up comes a gentleman, dressed for all the world as fine as a lord, and says he to me, says he, A'nt you from Bourgogne? So I says, says I, that I be sure enough. Well, he told me that he was from Joigny, where he dealt in wood. We found that we were fellow-countrymen, and then he said we would go and see *la tête du mort* (the death's head). I assure you he was uncommon civil; I didn't think there was nothing wrong, and away I goes with him; and as we were going out of the garden who should we meet at the gate but some others as he knowed: One was a dealer in linen."

"Two of them, were there not? A young and old man."

"Yes, sir."

"The old man had been taking wine at the depôt?"

"Yes, sir."

"I see your business; they trapped you?"

"'Faith, you are right; three thousand francs they got from me! a thousand crowns, in beautiful twenty-franc pieces."

"Ah, it was gold! Did they not bid you conceal it?"

"'Deed did they, and conceal it so well that, dash my buttons, if I could find it again."

"Ah! I know your men. Goury, (one of my agents to whom I addressed myself,) these must be *Hermelle*, *Desplanques*, and the *Père de famille*, (Family man.)"

AGENT. "It has all the appearance of being them."

"Had not one of them a long nose?"

"Yes, a precious long 'un."

"I see I am not mistaken."

"Oh no! you have clapt your finger on the chap at the very first time: some people would guess twice first. A long nose! Ah Monsieur Vidocq! you are a good fellow. Now I am no longer uneasy."

"Why?"

"Since they are your friends who have robbed me, it will be easy for you to recover my money: only let it be soon—if possible this very day."

"We do not go to work so quickly."

"Why it is, you see, because I must return home. My house will not go on well whilst I am away: I have left my wife quite alone; and then, you must know, the fair of Auxerre is in four days from this."

"Oh! you are in a hurry, my good man."

"Yes I am; but listen, we can manage: only give me fifteen hundred francs now down on the nail, and I will let you off free for all the rest. That's coming to the point, an't it? I think nobody can be more accommodating."

"True; but I do not make my bargains in this way."

"But yet it all can be done, if you will agree."

The Bourguignon having been heard, it was the turn of a Chevalier de Malta, who had apparently obtained a dispensation of marriage; for he was accompanied by his noble spouse, who brought her Bonne with her.

The CHEVALIER. "Sir, I am the Marquis *Dubois-velez*, an old emigré, and have given unequivocal testimonies of my attachment to the Bourbon family."

VIDOCQ. "That does you honour, sir; but what may be your business with me?"

The CHEVALIER. "I come here to beg you will be so kind as to have a search set on foot for my servant, who has made off from my house with a sum of three thousand seven hundred and fifty francs, and a gold chased watch on which I set a very considerable value."

VIDOCQ. "Is this all that has been stolen from you?"

The CHEVALIER. "I believe so."

The LADY. "No doubt he has taken other property. You know very well, Marquis, that for a long time not a day has passed but you have missed sometimes one thing, sometimes another."

The CHEVALIER. "True, Madame la Marquise; but at present let us only talk of the three thousand seven hundred and fifty francs and the watch. The watch must be had, whatever it cost me. It suffices to say, that it was given me by the late Madame de Vellerbil, my mother-in-law: you know that I would not lose it."

VIDOCQ. "It is possible, sir, that you will not lose it: but, in the first place, I shall be obliged to you to give me the names, surname and christian, and the description of your servant."

The CHEVALIER. "His name! That is not difficult. His name is Laurent."

VIDOCQ. "What country does he come from?"

The CHEVALIER. "I think from Normandy."

The LADY. "You are wrong, my friend. Laurent is a Champenois. I have heard him say twenty times that he was born at Saint Quentin. Besides Cunégonde can clear up this point.—(*Turning towards the Bonne*)—Cunégonde, was not Laurent a Champenois?"

CUNEGONDE. "I beg pardon of Madame la Marquise, but I think he came from Lorraine. When he had a letter, it always had the post-mark of Dijon."

VIDOCQ. "You do not seem unanimous on the place of his birth; and besides, Laurent is probably only his baptismal name: and there is 'more than one ass at the fair called Martin.' It will be necessary for you to tell

me his family name, or at least that you give me so accurate a description of his person that he must be recognized."

The CHEVALIER. "His family name! I do not know if he ever had one: those persons seldom have any: they have usually only what is given to them. I called him Laurent, because it suited me, and because it was the name of his predecessor: names are transmitted with the livery. As to his country, have I not told you he comes either from Normandy, Champagne, Picardy, or Lorraine? As to his person, his stature is of the common size. His eyes—good heaven! he has eyes like everybody else in the world—like—like you, like me, like the lady. His nose has nothing remarkable. His mouth is—— I have never looked particularly at his mouth. If we have a servant, it is to wait upon us: you must know that no one thinks of looking at him. As well as I remember, he was brown or deep chesnut colour."

MADAME. "My dear Marquis, I have some idea that he was fair."

CUNEGONDE. "Fair as a gypsey, then. He was as red as a carrot."

The CHEVALIER. "Possibly; but that is of very little consequence. What M. Vidocq needs to know, is, that before the robbery, I called him Laurent, and he must still answer to that name, unless he may have assumed another."

VIDOCQ. "Very true: M. de Lapalisse could not have spoken more oracularly. However, you will agree with me that to guide me in my search, some details rather more explicit and less vague are indispensable to me."

The CHEVALIER. "I know not how to give you any more accurate. But in my estimation, these should suffice: with a little address, your men will soon lay hands on the fellow; and they will speedily learn where he is spending my money."

VIDOCQ. "I should be greatly flattered if I could be of any service to you; but with such indefinite descriptions how do you suppose I can set out in the affair?"

The CHEVALIER. "Yet I come here with description so positive, that you have only, in my idea, to wish, and you will get hold of the man; it is a job half finished which I bring to you. Perhaps I have not told you his age, he may be thirty or forty."

CUNEGONDE. "He was not so old, Monsieur le Marquis, he was not more than twenty-four or twenty-five years of age."

The CHEVALIER. "Twenty-four, twenty-eight, thirty, forty, it is indifferent."

VIDOCQ. "Not so much so as you may imagine. But, sir, this servant came to you from some where or some place, of course he was recommended to you by somebody?"

The CHEVALIER. "By nobody, sir; a driver of a cabriolet sent him to me, that's all."

VIDOCQ. "Had he a character?"

The CHEVALIER. "Certainly not, he had none."

VIDOCQ. "He had some recommendation, testimonials?"

The CHEVALIER. "He showed me some papers, but that is all nothing, I did not pay any attention to them."

VIDOCQ. "In that case how can you imagine that I can find the thief? You offer me nothing, absolutely nothing, which can give me the smallest clue to the affair."

The CHEVALIER. "You are joking, surely, I offer you nothing! Why for a quarter of an hour I have been at the trouble of talking to you. I have answered all your questions. If it be necessary to put the thieves into your hands, what need is there of police? Ah! it was not so with M. de Sartines. I need not have told him the hundredth part of what I have just communicated to you and my servant, my watch, and my money would have been all forthcoming instantly."

VIDOCQ. "He was a great man, M. de Sartines. But as for me, I do not undertake to work miracles."

The CHEVALIER. "Well, sir, I shall go immediately to the prefect to complain of your careless conduct. Since you refuse to act, my friends on the right side, the deputies of my province, shall know that the police is good for nothing, and they will utter it in the tribune: I have credit, influence, and I will exercise them and then we shall see."

VIDOCQ. "Well, Monsieur le Marquis, go, a pleasant walk to you."

To this enraged elderly succeeded a man in a fustian coat, who thus spake:

"Be this here the master of the spies, the chap what ketches they thieves in such style, eh?"

"Well, my friend, what do you want?"

"Why I wants this here, a silver watch which somebody has done me out on, in a place where I was."

"Well, my lad, how did it happen? tell me all that occurred."

"Why then d' y' see, my name's Louis Virlouvet, a farmer, and vine dresser in Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, lawfully married to my missus, a father of a family, with four young 'uns, of which my wife is mother. She and I com'd to Paris to buy some tubs, and as I was a-walking along a-doing nor a-thinking o' nothing, I comes to a place not far from here, when, saving your presence, I felt hard pressed to ——. I stopped before a wall, y'see, and I unbuttons my smalls, and just as I was easing o' myself, somebody hits me a douse on the back. I turns round, and who should I see but a young lass, who says, says she, What! my lad Theodore! what is that you, my lad? Come and lets ha' a buss o'thy cheek, my darling; and so before you could cry parsnips, she kisses me, and then axes me if I'll go and have a drop o' summut wi' her. Now, as I am a vine-dresser ye know, and we vine-dressers are always ready for a drop, I was quite willing. She tells me she has a young friend that she wants to fetch. Well, says I, go

and fetch he, but stir yer stumps and make haste back d'ye see. Away trots madam and I waits; but as she did not come back, I got a-tired a-waiting for she, and a-going to pull out my watch to see what's o'clock, I'm d—— if there was e'er a watch left in my fob! It had melted like butter in a hot hand. Then, says I to myself, I'm done, and my watch is gone without saying good bye. I runs as hard as I could the same way she had gone, but no sight of madam; and the chaps I asked, told me as how I had best come here, and that your men would find my watch of silver what cost fifty-five francs, what I bought at Pontoise, at a watchmaking man's, what went like a angel, a-pointing out the days of the month, with a lock of my daughter's hair all done up by herself, nothing was ever more beautifuller."

"Did you look what sort of a woman she was?"

"What she that robbed me?"

"Why, yes."

"She is rather old, her youth has past; she is like the gammon of bacon, neither too fat, nor too lean; she is between stoutish and thinnish; she is p'raps about five feet (French measure) all but eight or nine inches, thick about her size, with a lace cap, cocked up nose rather a biggish 'un. Let's see how big's her nose? why I'll tell you; here as big as this weight like a pear on your papers, to hinder the wind from blowing them away, or within the size of it by a horse hair, with a red petticoat, blue eyes, a shell snuff-box of a rose colour, which was full."

"You give me a very singular account; these are all false details which you have given me: I am convinced that you were not robbed on the highway; for to have observed all these details you must have seen the woman for some time, and that pretty closely. Come, come, instead of giving us long stories not founded on common sense, confess that you allowed yourself to be tempted into a bad house, and that whilst you were there, your watch disappeared."

"I see as it is no manner of use to conceal anything from you. Yes, you are quite right."

"Then why tell me a false account."

"Because I was bid to tell you what I did to get my silver watch back, as cost me fifty-five francs."

"Can you point out the house where you went with this woman?"

"Certainly; it's a house on the first floor, in a room with a table, at the corner of the street."

"Well i'faith you give a very precise account to enable us to discover the place."

"Ah, so much the better; I shall get my watch back again, shall I not sir?"

"I did not say so, for you have given too vague a description."

"What! did I not just tell you that she had red eyes; I mean a red petticoat and blue eyes, and a lace cap; is not that clear enough—lace? I do not remember the colour of her stockings, but I know that she had packthread garters, and her shoes tied with the same; after this you don't want no dots to your i's; you know how to go to work. As soon as you give me my silver watch of fifty-five francs, I will give you a bottle and ten francs for your comrades to drink."

"I am much obliged to you, but I never work interestedly."

"Ah that's all very good and very fine, but the priest must live by the altar, and every one does by his trade, you know."

"I ask you for nothing."

"Yes, yes, but you will get back my watch of fifty-five francs?"

"Yes, if she bring it to me I will send it to you."

"I rely on you, at least do not go to put me in the box with the forgotten you know."

"Be easy."

"Well I wish you a very good day, master."

"Farewell."

"Good bye till I see you again."

The vine dresser being dismissed with all the hopes which his violation of the marriage contract could suggest, I saw one of those good shopkeepers of the Rue Saint Denis, whose forehead, however insignificant it may be, reminds one perpetually of poor Acteon.

"Sir, (said the citizen,) I have come to ask you to commence a search for my wife, who decamped yesterday with my clerk. I know not the route they have taken, but they cannot be far on the road. For they have carried off booty with them; money and goods, they have carried off everything, and they may escape! Oh, if they are not taken, I would rather lose my latin. I am sure they are still in Paris, and if you commence a search forthwith we shall catch them."

"I must observe to you that we do not commence our operations without some arrangement; we require an order for marching: begin by making against madame your wife and the ravisher, a complaint of adultery, in which you must accuse the latter of having carried off your effects and goods."

"Oh yes I will lodge a complaint, and whilst I am losing my time the traitors will get away."

"That is probable."

"Such delays when there is danger so near! My wife is my wife: every day, every night her fault is of more consequence. I am a husband, I am outraged; I am in my own right. She will only have children, and who will be the father? he will not be the father, I shall. No, since there is no divorce, the law ought to have foreseen"—

"Well, sir, the law has foreseen nothing, there is a prescribed form, and it cannot be dispensed with."

"Very fine, truly, form and ceremony! if it be so, well may we say, that forms empty our pockets. Poor husbands!"

"I know very well that you are much to be pitied, but I can do nothing in the affair; besides you are not a solitary sufferer."

"Ah, Monsieur Jules, you who are so obliging: do

be so good as to have them apprehended this very day; take that upon yourself; I beseech you do not refuse me, and you shall find that I am not ungrateful."

"I repeat to you, sir, that to do what you desire, I must have a mandate from the judicial authority."

"Well well; I see but too plainly that they will deprive me of wife and fortune! Who will they protect?—Vice. It is very worthy of the police, certainly! If it were the arrest of a Bonapartist you would be all at work: but it is a deceived husband, and no one stirs a step. It is delightful to see how the police conduct themselves; so when you see me again it shall be good for your eyes. My wife may return when she chooses, and if she is carried off again it will not be to you that I shall address myself: God protect me from such!"

The husband withdrew, very discontented, and it was announced to me that an original solicited a moment's conversation. He appeared. He had a long body, long coat, long waistcoat, long arms, long legs, a face—long, pale, icy, deathly, emaciated face, rising from a long stiff neck, like the rest of the long figure which belonged to him. The whole seemed to move on springs. At the sight of this automaton, his pigtail, which reached down to his loins, his loose gaiters, his rumpled shirt, his broad collar, his enormous sleeves, his large umbrella, and his small silk hat, I was constrained to do my utmost to avoid laughing in the face of this personage, so much did his comic air tally with his grotesque attire.

"Deign, sir," said I to him, "to be seated, and inform me of the motive which brings you hither."

"Mounseer, I hintroduce myself to you from Mister Lowender *, constable in Bowe street in the capital of Great Britain; he recommended me to you, Mounseer, to find my vife, who is making me a —— here in Paris with von Mounseer Gaviani, a Hitalian hofficer, what lodged in the public ouse."

* Query Lavender?—TRANSL.

"I am in despair, sir, to be compelled to refuse my aid in such a search. If it be only a search of this nature, I can tell you of a person who, for a certain sum, will do all that is requisite under these circumstances."

"Yes yes; a search varrant—I hunderstands you; you make me werry satisfied."

"Give me, if you please, the name of your wife, her description, and all the details which appear to you proper to direct our search."

"To direct you, I tell you my vife's name is Missus Becoot, 'cause I'm Muster Becoot, of the same family as my brother who is called Becoot, and our father before us was called Becoot. My vife and I vas married in Lunnun in eighteen hundred and fifteen: she vas andsome; she vas fair; her heyes vas black, her nose vas helegant, her teeth vite and little; she had a good deal of—front—bussom, and spoke French better than I do.—If you find vhere she is, I vill take possession on her, and conduct her back to Lunnun by the first wessel."

"I think I told you, sir, that it was not I who would undertake the charge of this search; but I will put you in a way to do it effectually, by introducing you forthwith to a person who will enter fully into your views. Givet, go and request the Duc de Modène to come here at his earliest convenience with 'le Père Martin.'" (The Duc de Modène was the nickname of a secret agent, a man of good conduct and air, whom I sent to the gambling houses.)

"Oh oh! you are a-going to hintroduce me to a duke. I am henchanted! a duke! a real live duke! If he can surprise my vife with this here hofficer, and git me the diworce I vants, he is my man of vax."

"I will engage that he shall find them together; I will even undertake that you shall surprise them in bed, if you like."

"Oh oh! in bed! that vould be better than the diworce. For a crim. con. hevidence nothing is better than

finding in bed together—Ah, Mounseer, I am much hindebted to you."

The Duc de Modène was not long in making his appearance, and as soon as he entered M. Becoot having arisen and saluted him with a triple reverence, spoke to him in these terms:—

"Mounseer Duke, I vants you to render a service to a misfortunate husband, who has bin forsaken by his vife."

The agent, who was not free of contempt towards the English, did not fail to assume the air of importance which accorded with the title which had been bestowed on him. After having arranged with all dignity the terms for his services, and taken notes of the indications which M. Becoot furnished, he promised to open the campaign instantly, that he might the sooner attain the desired result. The conversation was on this point, when I was requested by a messenger to attend at the office of the Attorney-General (Procureur du Roi). I consequently left M. Becoot, and the audience was closed until next day. Since I am in the mood for digressing, before I return to the categories, the reader may not be displeased to learn the conclusion of this affair with M. Becoot.

Forty-eight hours had scarcely elapsed, when the Duc de Modène came to tell me that he had discovered the retreat of the unfaithful she; she was with her Italian; and although they were on their guard, because they had learnt the arrival of the husband, he was certain that he could detect them in his presence in the midst of proofs of that horizontal intimacy which, as far as conviction is concerned, leaves nothing to be desired. Whilst the duc was explaining to me the stratagem which he proposed to make use of, enter M. Becoot, and, as I had anticipated, he was accompanied by his brother, another Britannic caricature. "Two make a pair," observed my agent, aside.

"Good day, Mounseer Védoc—ah, here is mister the Duke, I hoffer him my politeness."

"Monsieur le Duc has great news for you."

"Ah, ah! great news! You've found 'em, eh?—You may speak out afore mounseer; mounseer is a Becoot; he was my twin-brother. You've found 'em, really—found 'em, eh?"

"Come, Monsieur le Duc, tell these gentlemen what you have to say."

"Yes, yes; tell us, Mounseer le Duke."

"Well, then, I have found them; and as you wish it, I will shew them to you both in the same bed."

"In the same bed!" cried M. Becoot's brother, "that vill be a vonder of nater! a miracle! You're a conjurer, mounseer duke."

"I swear to you, that there is no conjuration in the matter! It is all a matter of physics."

"Yes, yes, physic (*laughing*), ah, ah, ah! rummish physic, I reckon."

"Since they sleep together."

"Yes, yes; nateral, wery nateral, in the same bed; charming cohabitation! charming!"

"Charming!" re-echoed the brother-in law of Madame Becoot, whose husband, laughing with all his might, evinced his delight at the fact by contortions and grimaces the most burlesque.

Mrs. Becoot and her lover had lodged for some months in the Rue Feydeau, at the house of one of those ladies, who, for their own particular profit, and the accommodation of strangers, keep a table d'hôte and an ecarté table; but anticipating persecutions, on the news of the arrival of the twin brothers, the adulterous couple took refuge at Belleville, where a general known to the lady gave them shelter. It was decided that they should seek them at this asylum; and as M. Becoot was in haste, it was decided that they should hurry on the *dénouement*.

The next day was Sunday, and there was to be a grand dinner at the general's, after which, according to the custom of the house, play would be introduced. The Duc de Modène, long known as a thorough *leg*,

had a good pretext for introducing himself at a meeting where the *Greeks* were admitted without difficulty. Going to Belleville when the evening drew on, he went to the salon of the general, and staid there till two o'clock in the morning, when he went out to rejoin the two brothers, who were in a hired carriage not far from thence.

"Now for it," said the duc; "the couple are between the sheets."

"Between the sheets!" cried M. Becoot.

"Yes, sir, between the sheets; I have almost assisted in putting them to bed; and if you have courage enough to dare to climb, I will undertake to lead you to the alcove, when you will only have to draw the curtain."

"Vat d'ye say?—climb! What do you mean?"

"We must get over the garden wall."

"*Goddem!* Get over the wall! Now you see if ve climbs, the servants will call out thief.—No, no; no climbing for me; and the guns and pistols bang, bang, pop, pop, over head and heels I shall pitch—and Mounseer Gaviani will rejoice! No, no!—no climbing, my hearty!"

"Yet you must, if you would have the offence decidedly proved."

"The Becoots, Mounseer le Duke, are not fond o' running risks."

"Then we must seize on the delinquents out of the general's house; that is the only way to incur no risk. I know that after the breakfast, they will get into a coach, which will take them to Paris; what say you to apprehending them in the coach?"

"In the coach?—yes, yes, for prudence' sake."

The Duc de Modène, his auxiliary, *le Père Martin*, and the two islanders, placed themselves as sentinels to watch the departure. M. Becoot asked a thousand questions, and made a thousand and one reflexions, more ridiculous each than the other. At length, about two o'clock in the afternoon, a coach stopped at the

door; a moment afterwards it was open to Madame Becoot and her cavalier. We may suppose that at this sight M. Becoot could no longer restrain his indignation;—he did not even frown. Your English husbands are marvellous men.

"You see, you see," he said to his brother, "my vife with her hinamurato."

"Yes, yes, I see. He was in the coach."

They found that the vehicle was directed to the Rue Feydeau. The Englishmen ordered their coachman to whip along, that they might get there first; and when they had reached the Porte Saint Denis, at the spot where a staircase leads to the Boulevard *Bonne Nouvelle*, they alighted. They soon perceived the coach, which was advancing at a gentle pace. The agents walked forward to stop it; and M. Becoot, having opened the door, said, with inconceivable phlegm,—

"Ah! good day, Mounseer. I beg your pardon, I've come for my vife, that you have been pleased to valk off with."

"Come, ma'am," added the brother, "don't go to make him a—— no more; come along."

Gaviani and Madame Becoot were perfectly terrified. Without any reply, they both alighted; and whilst the Italian gave up the contested prize, compelled to obey, the unfortunate lady was pitilessly installed in the other coach between the two Becoots, facing the two officers. Everybody was silent; when Madame Becoot, a little recovered from her alarm, cried from the widow—

"Gaviani! Gaviani, my friend! be tranquil and assured that I will only abandon you with life."

"'Old yer tongue, Mrs Becoot," said her husband coolly, "I horder you to be silent, ma'am. You are a faithless voman, you are a bad voman. Are you so shame-faced as to call Mounseer Gaviani? You are a felon, ma'am, a great felon: I will 'ave you put in the black-'ole."

"You will do nothing."

"I will! I will!" he stammered out balancing his head between the handles of two umbrellas, which, made of bucks' horn, formed a singular accompaniment to his brow."

"M. Becoot, all you can do will be useless. Ah! my dear Gaviani."

"Gaviani again! Gaviani for ever!"

"Yes, for ever. I detest you; I abhor you."

"You are my vife."

"But answer me, M. Becoot, are you fitted to have a wife? You are ugly, you are old, you are ridiculous, and you are jealous."

"I am good reason to be jealous."

"You wish to have a divorce, have I not given you full opportunity? I fly you; and what more would you have?"

"I want to be a —— legally."

"Would you have the scandal of it?"

"You vant to —— me in your own vay: I vant it to be done in a satisfactory manner in my own vay: I vant to be a ——, with justice and publicly, so as to get a sentence."

"You are a monster in my eyes; you are a tyrant: I will never stay with you."

"You shall stay for the present."

"You shall not have me alive then;" and thus menacing, she made a gesture as though to tear her face with her hands.

"Ketch 'old on her 'ands, brother." The brother did hold her hands; and then, after a brief struggle, she became more composed; but the sparkle of her eye betrayed the anger and fire that was within.

Roused, enraged, but handsome withal as much as passion can be, near these heteroclite beings—these immoveable and vacant faces—she looked like the Queen of Bacchantes between two baboons, or rather a volcano of love between two peaks of ice. But, notwithstanding, the return of M. Becoot to the hotel where he was lodg-

ing was a triumph. His first care was to shut her up in a room, the key of which he entrusted to none: but when a husband becomes his wife's gaoler, it is so agreeable to her to deceive his vigilance! We know the song—*Malgré les verroux et les grilles*, &c. *Spite of bolts and iron bars*, &c.

The third day of this conjugal captivity, Madame Becoot grew tired of her cage. The fourth, I called on M. Becoot: it was not twelve o'clock: I found him at table with his brother facing a plum-pudding, and a dozen bottles of Champagne, the corks of which they had already taken out.

"A good day, *bonne jor*, mounseer Vaidoc, you are werry purlite to come and give us a call. Vat say you to a drop o' Champayne?"

"Thank you; I never drink fasting."

"You are not an Englishman then."

"Well, you are now as happy as possible; the Duc de Modène has restored you your wife. I compliment you on it."

"Compliment! *Goddem*, she's hoff agen!"

"What! could you not keep her?"

"She was carried hoff, I tell you, the felon!"

"Since it is so, do not let us say any more about it."

"No, say no more about it, drink champagne; he is no felon."

These gentlemen again insisted that I should keep them company, but as I was compelled to preserve my head cool and clear, I begged them to excuse me, and, after congratulating them, took leave. They certainly were soon afterwards under the table.

In this way does your genuine Englishman cool his anger and slake his animosity; they are drowned in pint bumpers and brimming goblets, and if, when he sleeps, they call him *coucou*, and at his waking, pointing to him with the finger, say, *Ah, there he is*, he laughs angrily, and rather than hide his head, the tipler grows enraged. He will have an inquiry—gets a divorce. Whose is the fault? Gaviani's? Bergami's? the Prin-

cess's? to the gods who made her so handsome? No: To whom then? To porter, port, burgundy, champagne—in fact, to Bacchus, under every disguise, form, shape, and colour.

But why should I seek to penetrate the fog which envelopes manners not our own? We live on the banks of the Seine—why trouble ourselves as to what passes on the banks of the Thames? Perhaps some English Vidocq will one day teach us. Until then, I confine myself to the episode of M. Becoot, whom I never saw again.

But I return to *mes moutons*, that is, to my categories.

The distinction of thieves, according to the line of business they follow, would be of little import if, at the same time that I unveil the means exercised by them to live at our expense, I did not point out what precautions should be taken to place ourselves out of the reach of their attempts.

If they carried off but a tenth of the superfluities, perhaps there might be some cruelty in seeking to prevent them from procuring the necessary means of existence; but as considering the hazard of their mode of subsistence, between Irus and Crœsus (the beggar and the king,) they do not always choose, but take indifferently from where there is too much, and where there is not enough; and as besides, they take also to lavish profusely, I will, without mercy, open my battery upon them with all my skill, so as to beat down and make a breach in their industry, and, if it be possible, to put it *au sac*, according to the expression of our old *Polyarcetes*, I mean the old chroniclers, or rather romancers.

No capital in the world, London excepted, has within it so many thieves as Paris. The pavement of the modern Lutetic is incessantly trodden by rogues. It is not surprising; for the facility of hiding them in the crowd makes all that are badly disposed resort thither, whether French or foreign. The greater number are fixed constantly in this vast city; some only come like

birds of passage, at the approach of great occasions, or during the summer season. Besides these exotics, there are indigenous plants, which make a fraction in the population, of which the denominator is tolerably high. I leave to the great calculator, M. Charles Dupin, the task of enumerating them in decimals, and telling us if the sum that it amounts to should not be taken into consideration in the application of the black list.

Parisian robbers in general hate the provincial thieves; they have, and justly, the character of making no difficulty in selling their comrades to preserve their liberty. Thus, when by such a circumstance they are thrown out of their sphere, they do not easily find any person to associate with; besides, they have a great predilection for the place of their birth. The children of Paris cannot separate themselves from their mother; they have for her a depth of inexhaustible tenderness:

A tous les cœurs bien nés, que la patrie est chère!

Transported to a department, a Parisian thief is completely out of his latitude. Had he been flung from the moon like an aërolite, he could not be more bewildered, more awkward—he is a cockney, a thorough cockney in every sense of the word; at every moment he fears to take a dog for a fox. It is terrible when a man does not feel his way and know his ground! he knows not where nor how to put hands or feet, and is, perhaps, walking on burning coals, *ceneri doloso*. He dares not advance a step, because he has a bandeau over his eyes, and if he should get into a difficulty, no one is at hand to cry "Take care;" on the contrary, they are amused to see him in peril, because they think him a coward. If he embark in any plot, they leave him to finish it; or if in his road he meet a gendarme, never mind, ill luck to him, bad fortune befal him.

In a small town a thief is completely out of his element; he is like a hen with only one chick, like a fish in a net, a fish in a frying-pan; it is not his natural place; there is too much quiet in a circumscribed city, too much tranquillity, circulation goes on much

too regularly, too clearly, much more is he at his ease in the midst of tumult, confusion, bustle, embarrassment, disorder, and a troubled and muddy stream of affairs. All these advantages are concentrated in Paris, in the limited but well-filled department of the Seine, in a periphery of from five to six leagues, in a space which would scarcely suffice for the formation of a park for a great man. Paris is but a point, a dot, a speck on the globe, but that point is a cloaca. At this point rally all sorts; at this point myriads of possessors of life *par excellence* meet, pass, repass, cross, jostle, disturb, and live. The Parisian thief is habituated to this hurly burly, this assemblage; and out of its sphere of action he wanders vaguely, and his talent is lost, extinct. He knows it very well, and what proves it incontestably is, that if he can only contrive to escape from the Bagne, it is always to the capital that he flies on outstretched wing; he will soon again be caught—but what then? He will have once more worked in his own way, and in his peculiar element.

Provincial thieves soon enough come to Paris, not that the climate suits them better than any other, but they are a species of cosmopolites, who find that place their home, and that country their fatherland, where there is any thing to be stolen. *Ubi bene ibi patria*, (where there are the means of subsistence, there is my country,) is their motto; they will accommodate themselves equally well when resident at Rome as at Pekin, if there be plunder attainable. They have neither agreeable exterior, nor the subtle plans, nor the lofty demeanour of the Parisian plunderer, and were they to live for an age in Paris they would always be clowns, (*yokels*). *Les amis de Pantin* (the men of Paris) would always reproach them with being made of a *handful of blunders*, and without resemblance to any thing that has a human appearance. Their conduct and manners are their weak and failing points; they have no urbanity; and do what they can or will, they will never be perfumed by that Attic flower whose

charming odour delights and overcomes the brilliant and frivolous world, which can only be duped after it has been seduced. They are destitute of that sharp wit which, under certain circumstances, gives to the indigenous thief a decided superiority; but yet they have more capacity. Beneath a rough unpolished exterior they conceal a share of astuteness and finesse which, in first-rate enterprises, make them competent to surmount obstacles opposed to them, and to acquire the confidence of reflective persons. Consult the archives of crime, of all extensive robberies, all daring and deeply-planned plundering, and they will be found the work and deed of provincial robbers. They are not timorous, but bold, persevering, reflective. They plan well, they execute still better.

The original robbers by profession in the capital are seldom assassins; they have a horror of blood, and when they do shed it, it is always with regret, and under circumstances unforeseen and unprovided for, into which they have been involuntarily urged. It is very rare that they are provided with arms, and they only use them to escape, in case they are in danger of being apprehended in the commission of some act of robbery. The great crimes of which Paris is occasionally the theatre, are generally perpetrated by strangers. One particularity is very singular: it is that assassinations are generally committed by some novice, in the commencement of his career. This is true, perfectly true, although it may displease those observing moralists who repeat after the poet:—

*Ainsi que la vertu le crime a les degrés**.

Before the commission of a bad action, experienced thieves calculate the consequences of the enterprise which they are about to undertake. They know the difficulties they have to encounter, they play because they must cast the dice; but if it be a question, whether

* Crime has its degrees, as well as virtue.

they shall set their "all" upon the cast, they consider twice. The code which they study, perpetually reminds them, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther," and a great proportion of them recede before solitary imprisonment, before seclusion for life, before death. It is not without intention, that in this enumeration I place death in the last place; it is the least of dreads. I will prove it so, and then let any one decide how far our penal laws are properly and fittingly graduated.

Provincial thieves, generally less civilized than those whose education has been carried on in Paris, experience no repugnance in committing murder; they do not confine themselves to self-defence, they attack, and frequently in their expeditions, are not only rash, but also testify a cruel and sanguinary feeling carried to the greatest extent. A thousand barbarous traits, noted down in the judicial journals, can prove what I here assert.

The wisdom of nations has long proclaimed it as a truth, that *wolves do not devour each other;* and that the proverb, though somewhat "musty," may not be belied, thieves have a vast idea of the sentiments of confraternity. They all regard each other as the members of one large family; and although the provincial thieves and the Parisian thieves are usually but little disposed to give each other any assistance, antipathy or prejudice is not carried to any injurious extent. There is always an understanding which is observed and respected in these generalities: "the beast," as would say a philosopher of the Upper Rhine, "has a kindly feeling to the beast of his own race; the brother likes to find a brother." Thus thieves have signs whereby they recognize each other, and a language peculiarly their own. To possess this language, to be initiated into the signs, even when you are not of their profession, is already a claim to their sympathy, and is, at any event, a presumption that they are with *friends*. But these, though more valuable and useful under certain circumstances than those of freemasonry, are not an infallible

guarantee of security, and even if we knew slang as well as a certain young lord whom I abstain from mentioning by his ignoble name, I would advise that no exceeding confidence should be placed in such an acquisition. I will tell a short adventure, which I fancy will prove what I now state: I ask pardon of my reader if I again interrupt the continuous thread of my Memoirs to tell a tale, but it is soon said.

Père Bailly, an old gatekeeper of Sainte Pelagie, had for some months changed his employment for that of keeper of the Depôt of Mendicity at Saint Denis. Père Bailly was an old boy, who liked very well the juice of the grape; but where is the jailer who does not drink, particularly when in good fellowship, and some one else pays for the liquor? For twenty-five years that he was in the prison, Père Bailly had seen many thieves, he knew them almost all, and they all had a *regard* for him, because he behaved kindly towards them; he never took advantage of his station, to worry them as much as possible. Towards those whose purse chinked well, he paid many little attentions, and we know what a jailer's "little attentions" are.

One day the old man had come to Paris to get a small sum in the way of dividend, which he had amassed by economy during long service. It was the *subsidiæ senectutis* (provision for old age), the ant's provender, the wherewithal to procure the morning's whet and the daily quid. Payday had arrived, and Père Bailly touched the money, *two hundred francs*; he had it, but going and coming he had swallowed a few drams, so that when he returned to his post he was rather gay; that was so much the better, it gave him vigour, and strengthened his legs.

As he was walking along in a very happy mood, delighted at having settled his business so comfortably, under the Gate Saint Denis two of his old boarders accosted him, smacking him on the back.

"Ah, good day, Père Bailly!"

"(Turning round) Good day, my lads!"

"Will you have a drop of any thing standing?"

"Standing?—oh, yes, for I have no time to sit down and take it."

They entered the *Deux Boules*.

"A quartern and *three outs*, quick and good."

"Well, my sons, what are you doing?—how go matters, eh? Well, I imagine, for you seem *flush of blunt and in good feather*."

"Why, as for that, we have not much to complain of; since we left the 'Stone Pitcher' business has been briskish."

"I am glad on't; I like to see you happy; but take care how you get into *Queer-street*, it is an awkward place."

He had emptied his glass, and put out his hand to bid adieu;—

"What, already?—we do not meet so often; and we will have another *go*;—another quartern!"

"No, no; another time; I am in a hurry, and must toddle; and then I am footsore, I have run about so much this morning, and I have a good walk yet before me to Saint Tenaille (Saint Denis)."

"A minute more or less," said one of the coves, "that won't hinder you. Let us go and sit down in the tap-room; shall we, Père Bailly?"

"Why, I can't refuse you; come, I will go with you, but tell them to bring in the liquor quickly; one quartern, and no more; I declare I will not have a drop beyond that—I make an oath!"

The quartern was emptied; a third was called for, and entered, and went by the same channel; as did a fourth, fifth, sixth, and Père Bailly did not discover that he had perjured himself. At last he was completely drunk, and kept saying between every draught:

"Well, it's no use talking, I must toddle; it is getting dark, and that is not all. I have two hundred francs in my parcel; and if I should be robbed on the road?"

"What do you fear? there is not a *prig* who would

do so to you; they know you too well to do that, Papa Bailly! he can go free any where, Papa Bailly!"

"I know that; you are right. If they were the lads of the Pantin (Paris), I should be known; but *green prigs*, country bumpkins, new at the business, I should in vain make the arçon *.

"Oh, there's no danger;—your health, Père Bailly!"

"Yours;—ah, now I am not at all tired, but go I must; there is no preventing it. Good night, take care of yourselves."

"Well, well, we are not ambitious to get to your house in *Key* street."

They then helped him to put his stick over his shoulder, at the end of which was the parcel containing the money. Then Père Bailly, who was careful about it, takes his departure.

He reached the Faubourg, puffing, stumbling, rolling, balancing, reeling, like a two-penny postman who has business on both sides of the way, and went by sinuosities along, zig-zag. Whilst he was alphabetizing, and making the letters S Z, and all the other crooked ones in the alphabet, and some nondescript and hieroglyphical, the two "prigs" were consulting as to the plan they should adopt.

"If you take my advice," said one, "we will take the two hundred *bob* from the old hunks."

"You are right, his chink is as good as another's."

"To be sure, let's follow him."

"Agreed."

In despite of his losing much ground, Père Bailly had already reached the barrier, and they followed close astern. Still overpowered by wine he sailed against

* The *arçon* is a sign of recognizance, which corresponds with what is called the *grip* in masonic language. It is made by drawing the thumb vertically down the face on one side of the nose to the lips. This is accompanied with a peculiar noise or cracking.

wind and wave: he had too much sail—more sail than ballast; he stumbled, heaved, retrograded, went crab-fashion sideways, so much so, that all the coachmen invited him to have a cabriolet.

"Be off with you, fellows," said the gracious turnkey to this offer, "Père Bailly has a firm foot and a good eye."

He soon had reason to be less proud, for on reaching the plain of Vertus, he found himself much embarrassed. Figure to yourself this worthy of a Gaul in the clutches of the two thieves, who instantly seizing his throat, took away his parcel. In vain did he make the sign which should have served him; *du maigre, du maigre*, he bawled out lustily, (password which he wished them to understand;) he told them his name: *it is the Père Bailly;* but neither to signs, words, nor name, would they give ear. "There is neither fat nor lean *maigre*," (said the thieves, altering the sound of their voices) "let go the parcel," and so saying, they disappeared.

"That is rude, very rude," murmured the victim, "but they will not carry it to paradise."

This prophetic menace was very nearly accomplished, but between them and justice there was in the brain of the old man anti-mnemotechnic vapours, and in his hemisphere, the thick gloom of profound night. Père Bailly is dead. I resume the thread of my discourse: attention!

It would be impossible to class thieves if they did not class themselves. First, an individual obeys his inclination to plunder: he robs right and left; all that presents itself is fish for his net; on the principle, the proverb, "*Opportunity makes the thief*;" but your *regular prig*, your *downy cracksman*, makes the opportunity for himself, and it is only in prison that he acquires what he requires to accomplish him as a perfect master of his profession. After having undergone one or two short punishments, for there is no beginner who does not 'go to school,' he knows, and is made to know

his own adequacy and aptitude; then, enlightened on his means, he resolves to adopt a decided class and branch, and never leave it but 'on compulsion.'

Thieves by extraction are, for the most part, Jews or Gipsies; encouraged by their parents, they practise in a measure from their cradle. Scarcely able to use their legs and feet, they accustom their hands to picking and stealing, and all mal-practices. They are young Spartans in whom from 'night till morn, from morn till dewy eve', is instilled the admirable system of allowing nothing to escape their clutch. Their vocation is marked out beforehand: they will follow the oblique paths of their race; guides and lessons will not fail them, but they are thieves in every department; and that they may not be ignorant of their peculiar turn of mind and disposition, they try their hands in every line, and as soon as they have discovered that in which they excel, they confine themselves to that, it is their regular and determined pursuit: they have adopted a special business, and do not wander from it.

Since the deluge, there has been but one Voltaire, he was a universal man. From the creation of the world, there has never, perhaps, been found amongst thieves one with an encyclopedic head: with but few exceptions, these are very circumscribed beings, and consequently the least eccentric I have ever known. In fine, each limits himself to collecting the fruits from the branch to which he appertains: when the branch yields but poorly, they glean; when it is entirely barren, they pass on to another, but they do not pluck from two branches at once, and perhaps they would not be gainers if they did, since each branch is a monopoly; and monopolists, whatever be their rank, station, or object, are too jealous of their prerogatives to allow of any one's infringing thereon. Some thieves, however, have two strings to their bow—two stems to their tree—as a certain actress of the Porte Saint Martin would say. She would be right; these privileged gentry were generally married men: the man worked in his depart-

ment, the wife in hers; or else, to make a comfortable house, they each, with mutual accord, contribute to their mutual labours.

Some of these worthy professors have a degree of pride. The swindler, who is a man of the world, despises the pickpocket; the pickpocket, who confines himself to the practice of adroitly abstracting a purse or a watch, would conceive himself offended, if it were proposed to him to ransack a room; and he who makes use of false keys to procure access to an apartment which does not appertain unto himself, considers the highway robber as an infamous and ungentlemanly character *.

On the ladder of crime, whether he be high or low, whether he ascend or descend, man has his vanity—his disdain. Everywhere, in the most abject conditions of life, that his I MYSELF may not suffer from vexation and humiliation, he takes care to persuade himself that he is a better man than the one before or the one behind him. That he may inflate himself the more, he reflects, as concerns the exterior world, solely on the very lowest class of it. That, at least, does not put him to shame: he is steeped in mud; but if he raises his head above the mire—if he sees another deeper in than himself—he thinks he is on plain ground; that he governs his destiny, regulates his steps, and goes on his way with a rejoicing heart. This is the cause why all the rogues who have not overleaped this mean region of perversity, in which probity exists but as a reminiscence, have always pride in being less criminal than some others; this is the cause why, above this sphere, it is, on the contrary, who shall make the most parade of their infamy and crime; this is, in fine, the cause why, in each species, even above that mean region in which disho-

* This feeling is not new, nor is the expression of it original. In our admirable "Beggars' Opera," Peachum tells us, in his opening song, that

"Through all the conditions of life,
Each neighbour abuses his brother," &c.—TRANSL.

nour is more or less considered, there is not a rogue who does not aspire to be the first of his class,—that is to say, the most skilful, the most successful, or, what amounts to the same thing, the greatest knave.

It is well understood that I here allude only to professed robbers, who are the regular Cossacks of our civilization. As to the countryman who steals a truss of hay, the cobbler who makes false money, the notary who lends himself to a false signature, or writes a will under the dictation of a corpse,—they are irregular Cossacks, from pure chance, who cannot be classed. It is the same with regard to isolated authors of all deeds to which they are urged by the turmoil of passion,—hatred, anger, jealousy, love, avarice, and the fury of frantic depravity. Assassins by profession are the only ones whom I have given myself the trouble to describe in my categories: but first, I will "show up" those whose manners, habits, and bearing are more gentle. The session commences—show in the *Cambrioleur*.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE CAMBRIOLEUR.

The costume of the city—The habitual quid—Houses without a porter—Curiosity of the lodgers—The midwives' messengers—Waistcoats and cravats—The trophy of love—Baskets and scuttles—New faces—Tremble for Sunday—Good advice—Take a stick—Houses with a porter—Pay your watchmen—*Cambrioleurs à la flan*—The fire-work and the nosegay—The *carouble*ur—A short list of suspicious gentry—Spies—The *nourrisseurs*—Conceal the openings—Perfidious neighbours—Oh! my fine fellow, you are known in spite of your handsome mask.

CAMBRIOLEURS are plunderers of rooms either by force or with false keys. In the city, that is to say, out of their habitual profession, it is not difficult to recognize them. They are, for the greater part, young men, the eldest of whom are not thirty years of age: from eighteen to thirty is the age of a Cambrioleur. They are ordinarily well-dressed. But be their costume what it may, if they have donned waist-coat, great-coat, or close-coat, they cannot divest themselves of a plebeian air; and at the first glance it may be decided that they are not gentlemen. They generally have dirty hands; and the presence of an enormous quid of tobacco, which they roll about in the mouth incessantly, distorts their features in a very peculiar manner. They seldom carry a stick or cane, still more unfrequently do they wear gloves, although they sometimes have them.

The cambrioleurs do not attempt to clear out a room before they are in some way acquainted with the habits of the person who occupies it. They must discover when he is absent, and if there be adequate booty. Those houses which have no porters are most favourable to their enterprises; when they contemplate a stroke they go three or four together, who enter and go up stairs successively. One knocks at the door to ascertain whether any one be within. If no answer be given, it is a good sign, and they commence opera-

tions; and to be guarded against a surprise whilst they are breaking the lock or using the centrebit, one of the gang stations himself on the upper, and another on the lower staircase.

Whilst they are going on with the opening it may happen that the tenant goes up or down stairs, and if he be inquisitive enough to inquire what these strangers want, he is told that they are going to the *lieu d'aisance*, or ask for some name which they know is an unknown one; sometimes they want a washerwoman, a nurse, a shoemaker, or a midwife newly established. We must notice in this case, the questioned thief stammers rather than speaks; that he avoids looking in the face of the interrogator, and that, in haste to give him space to pass by, he squeezes himself against the wall with his back to the staircase.

A very strange peculiarity is that when a cambrioleur of renown adopts a style of cravat and waistcoat, all the confraternity take him for their 'mould of fashion,' as regards these two vestments; the prevailing colours, are red, yellow, &c.

In 1814, I apprehended a band of twenty-two thieves, twenty of whom had waistcoats of the same cut and material; they seemed cut from the same stuff, and made by the same hand. In general, thieves are like prostitutes, there is always a something about them which betrays their profession: they are fond of a medley of fine colours, and whatever care they take to ape people of respectability or fashion, the most distinguished air and demeanour they can assume is that of Sunday-dressed mechanics. It is to no purpose that they have their ears pierced, small rings, and a hair chain decked with gold ornaments, and other gewgaws pressed into the service; the chain is too obtrusively placed on the waistcoat; it is always a trophy of love, and they make too much parade of it! a velvet hat, with the pile half standing, half lying down, has much value in their eyes: I am here speaking only of thieves who are faithful to the traditions of their trade; as to those

who discard it, we can guess at them by manners in which there is something constrained which is not to be found in an honest man. This results from the timidity of guilt; it is the awkwardness of an apprehension of betraying themselves; they see that they are observed, and dread to be so; if they speak, there is in their conversation a stiffness, a shyness, an assumption of language, frequently comic, as well from the quantity of false concords, as from *malapropic* burlesque of words, of which they do not know the meaning; they do not converse; they chatter, incessantly shifting the topic, going on at random, diverging from the subject at every moment, profiting by every opportunity of changing ground, and all chances of turning the theme of colloquy.

Some cambrioleurs are accompanied on their enterprises by women, who carry panniers and baskets like washerwomen, in which they put the stolen property. The appearance of a woman descending a staircase, or going through a passage in such guise, is a circumstance which excites no curiosity or suspicion, particularly if we see the female for the first time. The frequent entrances and exits of individuals whom we are in the habit of seeing in a particular place, denote always bad designs.

The most productive days for cambrioleurs are those fine Sundays in summer, during which the laborious population of Paris go abroad without the barriers, to taste the pleasures of the country. The cambrioleurs will be reduced to a nonplus as soon as we wish. Let but the persons who have no porters at their house door leave some one in the room when they go out; let the tenants, in fact, renounce the fatal system of isolation, which is favourable only to malefactors; let them consider themselves as co-interested, and let the neighbour watch for his neighbour; let every stranger that enters, goes out, goes up-stairs or down, be suspected, compelled to give some account of himself, and if he testify the least hesitation, let him be detained

until he have given all necessary certainty that no robbery has been committed. Let each tenant, in whom the appearance of the unknown person had inspired distrust, warn all the other lodgers forthwith that they may be on their guard; let the person at whose apartment the suspicious he, she, or they has or have knocked to ask for some name unknown, not content himself with shutting his door in a rage, but follow the inquirer and not lose sight of him until he knows that he has left the premises: let the inquirer, if he have introduced himself without having knocked or rung the bell, or without having waited until it was opened to him, be considered as an evil designing person and treated as such; in this case the use of a stick is very much to the purpose—employ it effectually.

Would you rout out and root out the cambrioleurs?—always have the key of your apartment in a safe place, never leave it in the door within side or without. Are you going out?—do not hang it up any where; lend it to no one on any account, not even to *stop a bleeding at the nose**. If you are compelled to be from home some time, think of some place of concealment, where you can hide your choicest valuables; the place most exposed is frequently that which is not searched. I would most willingly put my reader in the safe way, but I fear that I may give indications to the thieves. It is prudent not to have always the same hiding-place.

If you have taken the precautions I advise, you can do nothing better than leave all your keys about on your tables. If thieves come, you will save them the trouble of using violence and putting you to considerable expense. If there be secret drawers to your secretary, or wardrobes, leave them open, otherwise you will be exposed to the ravages of *Monseigneur*, the powerful crow-bar, which no locks can resist. Open, open, but hide, hide, that is the real secret of not being robbed.

Houses with porters would be completely protected

* *Vide* vol. i. page 199, et seq.—*Transl.*

from the species of robbery which I am describing, if the porters were more employed in fulfilling their duties than levying a tax on persons who will fee them; but these porters are a terrible set. In the first place they are provided with a vast deal of useless curiosity which is often dangerous; the trumpets of all slanders and lies; great improvisatores, cacklers, and blabs, they only concern themselves about circumstances true or false which may turn to profit their mania for blackening characters. Thus when we wish to deceive their vigilance it is very easy to get or send them away from their lodge. I have frequently thought of a means of rendering porters exclusively attentive to their duties, and this means I believe I have discovered. It is, in the first place, to pay them at a more liberal rate than is now used; then to expect from them a security, which, except by climbing, and one or two other ways, should be answerable for the robbery committed in the houses of which they were the guardians.

I return to the cambrioleurs, of whom there are two very distinct varieties; the first is the cambrioleurs *à la flan* (robbers of apartments by chance), who introduce themselves into rooms without any previous plan or arrangement. These improvisatores are those who go knocking from door to door; they are sure of nothing; when there is spoil they take it; when there is none the thief loses his time and chance.

The trade of cambrioleur *à la flan* is very hazardous without being lucrative: three-fourths of the time the play does not pay for the candles. They live at the expense of the Sunday holiday makers, feast-goers, and diners out by profession; and whilst to repay himself for the labour of the week, the honest hard-working artificer, surrounded by his little family, goes to see the sight on the water, the distribution of provisions, fire-works, betakes himself to the admirable representation of the "Galley Slave," the "False Key," the "Thieving Magpie," whilst the play seems to him admirable, or the thieves excite his laughter, at his house brigands more

substantial are doing a bit of business, and after the pleasures of the day, it is at home that he finds the real thing has been acted.

The second variety of cambrioleurs is that of *carroubleurs*: they adventure nothing. They procure information from the servants, the room-cleaners, bed-makers, painters, paper-hangers, carpet-makers; and learning perfectly the places which can be of use to them, they go straight to the point. Furnished as they are with the most accurate information, and most precise indications, they are never deceived. The greater portion of their time they use false keys only, which they make from the impressions they procure from the spies their accomplices.

The third variety is that of *nourrisseurs*, so called because they nurse or *nourish their affairs*. To nourish an affair is to have it in perspective, and await the moment for perpetration. The nourrisseurs premeditate their enterprises long beforehand, and do not attempt to gather the pear until it be fully ripe. When they have an affair in view which they themselves have arranged, or which has been pointed out to them, they proceed with certainty that they are not entering on a nullity. If they propose to operate on a man whose property is in the funds, they learn the period at which he receives his dividend. Do they determine on making a descent on a retail shopkeeper; they choose as the time of paying him and his cash a visit the end of the month or the first days in January. Under any circumstances they have positive information, at least as far as concerns their modes of getting access.

The nourrisseurs are generally men of mature age; their appearance, without being precisely elegant, yet announces ease. They are insinuating and skilful in contriving to procure access to those houses where they wish to make a capture. When there are many occupants, they form an acquaintance with a shoemaker, a washerwoman, or some mechanic near, at whose abode they present themselves and hold conversations. The

workman doubts nothing; the pretence of seeing him is the cause of the frequent comings and goings.

There are nourrisseurs who, having contemplated a robbery in a house, hire an apartment there. Then they are in no hurry; and if a fine opportunity should present itself, they do not attempt any thing before they have acquired in their new neighbourhood the consideration necessary to quell all suspicion. They assume vast condescension and politeness; they have nothing on credit; they go to market cash in hand; if there be any noise, it is never in their apartment; they come home and go to bed early; their conduct is extremely regular; at a pinch they affect great devotion; the mother and children, if there be any, go to mass. In every country devotion is employed as a mask, but at Paris, more than any where else, it frequently conceals evil designs.

Many months pass away; at length comes the moment when reputation is established; the nourrisseur has had leisure to take all his measures; he commences operations, and suddenly one day it is found that one of the lodgers, or perhaps the landlord himself, has been plundered of his most valuable property. The rumour is great, every body is indignant at it, every one is astonished: the thief must have known the persons. The cambrioleur is the first to say so. As he has not failed to send away the stolen goods, and is quite certain that they will not be found, he advises, he invites a general search. The next quarter he moves his quarters, and every body is sorry, he was such a nice man!

CHAPTER XLVIII.

The rendezvous—Two notorious thieves—The placard—Speaking too much is injurious—The danger of a local memory—A juridical mistake—M. Delaveau and M. de Belleyme, or the evil genius and the good genius—Horrible consequences—One reputation is as good as another—There is a mean path.

To judge by the multitude of robberies, the perpetrators of which cannot be detected, we are at first tempted to think that the number of haunts of the kind we have spoken of in the preceding chapter is very considerable, and besides that, it is a difficult matter to convince them. However, he who has not discovered it to-day may to-morrow, for sooner or later impunity has its termination. I could quote a thousand cases to prove it, but confine myself to the following:—

M. Tardif, a notary at the corner of Rue de la Vieille Draperie, was for a long time the point of action of a band of robbers, amongst whom were the celebrated cambrioleurs Baudry and Robé. They, passing one morning before a notary's, saw a bill stuck up, which on perusal they found to be notice of a room to let; it suited them, but was not in proper trim. A new paper was indispensable, and the wainscoat wanted painting, and to whom should they confide the care of this necessary embellishment? a young painter had been working in the apartments of the notary, and they sent for him, and whilst he was pasting the paper and ornamenting the wainscoat, they talk with him. Unfortunately he possessed a memory for localities, and there was not at M. Tardif's a single arrangement that he did not fully remember, not a chink or corner escaped him, not a piece of furniture of which he could not accurately point out the use and situation in the apartment. Without thinking further of it, he supplied all the requisite information. Six weeks afterwards M.

Tardif was robbed: who were the guilty perpetrators? no one knows anything about it, and can scarcely form a conjecture, but people are never betrayed but by some one concerned about them. One of the thieves, after having had his share of the plunder, sold his accomplices. They were all apprehended and condemned. They deserved their fate, and the sentence passed against them would only have been just, if it had not included the young painter, whose indiscretion was at the utmost only imprudence. He received first fourteen years in irons, which he underwent in the Bagne at Brest.

Afterwards liberated, this man, whom I shall not name, although the world must declare him innocent, lives now in Paris. Head of a prosperous establishment, excellent citizen, husband, and father, he lives happily, and yet it very nearly happened, that the injustice, of which he was the victim, was not extended through the effect of a surveillance contrary to the spirit of the code, under the control of which he was sentenced. This surveillance I received the command to put into execution, but I did not lend my aid to an abuse of power, which, under my successor, has nearly arrived at its accomplishment. An arbitrary power so revolting may suit M. Delaveau to whom it was so agreeable to act up to the extremest severity of the laws. Under M. de Belleyme, whose accession to the prefecture has produced so much good, it deserved to be proscribed, and it has been. Surveillance, I shall take every opportunity of saying, is a most atrocious hardship, because a perpetual mark of infamy. Suppose the liberated prisoner here mentioned had not resolved to free himself from it, what would have been the result? At first he would have been compelled to come and present himself periodically at my office, then to have made his appearance once a month at the commissary of police of his quarter who is his neighbour. From that, persons, who would never have believed him to be an old galley slave, would have thought

him a spy in actual work; one character is as good as the other. Disgraced, despised, abandoned by all the world, he would have been reduced to die of hunger, or devote himself to crime for a subsistence. Such are, for a condemned man, innocent or guilty, the frightful consequences of a state of surveillance; they are inevitable: I mistake—between hunger and the scaffold there is a mean path—SUICIDE.

CHAPTER XLIX.

I arrive from Brest—The good woman—Pity is not love—My first meal—The father-in-law—The *Harlequin* and the *persillade*—Suppers in the Rue Grenétat—My *cambrioleuse*—I ally myself to '*clean out*' a pawnbroker—Annette appears in the horizon—Great discomfiture—I fall sick—A theft to pay the apothecary—Henriette pays for the broken pots—I see her again—A fugitive—He gets the assistance of the guard to carry off the treasure of the police—Unjust suspicions—The fugitive is betrayed—Memorable words—A colossal reputation—The chef-d'œuvre of the kind—Hang yourself, brave Crillon!—Go to England and they will hang you.

THE mistress of a thief named *Charpentier*, but better known by two nicknames, *La tache de vin*, and the *Trumeaux*, had been betrayed with him, as guilty of robberies by the help of false keys. Although her lover, of whom she was the accomplice, had been sentenced to the gallies, she, for want of proof, was acquitted. Henriette, for that was her name, was connected with Rosalie *Dubost*, and no sooner had she recovered her liberty, than she associated with her to commit fresh robberies in chambers. But many declarations made to the police, soon attracted its attention to the two friends. Henriette lived in the Rue Grand Hurleur. I received a command to watch her, and having arranged my method of making acquaintance with her, I met her one day at the door of her house and thus accosted her.

"Ah, stop," said I; "well met, nothing could be better, I was going to meet you."

"But I do not know you."

"Do you not remember that I have seen you with Charpentier at the *Ile d'Amour?*"

"Possibly."

"Well! I have just arrived from Brest, your man sends remembrances; he would willingly have joined you, but the poor devil is amongst the suspected, and it is more difficult to escape than ever."

"Ah mordié! I remember you well now: I perfectly recollect that we were together at La Chapelle at Duchesne's when we were having a *lark* with our friends."

After this recognition, which was all I wished, I asked Henriette if she had any '*job in view.*' She promised me marvels and miracles; and to prove to me how desirous she was of being useful to me, she pressed me with a great earnestness to instal myself at her house. The offer of partaking her domicile was made so heartily that I could not but accept it. Henriette lodged in a small room, the whole furniture of which consisted of one chair and a flock bed, with a woollen mattress, the appearance of which did not invite one to repose. She instantly led me to this retreat.

"Sit down," she said, "I shall not be out long; if any person knocks, do not answer."

In fact, she had not long been absent, when I saw her enter carrying a bottle in one hand, and in the other two pieces of bacon and a loaf. It was but a sorry repast that she offered, but no matter, I pretended to eat with appetite. The meal ended, she told me that she was going to see her man's father, and begged me to sleep until she returned. As it was necessary to appear in want of sleep, I cast myself on the bed, which was so hard that it appeared like a sack of nails.

Two hours afterwards, the father Charpentier arrived, who embraced me, wept, and spoke of his boy.

"When shall I see him again?" said he, and his tears flowed again.

But how deep soever grief may be, it is necessary

sometimes to dry our tears; the father Charpentier dried up his, and proposed that I should go and sup with him at the *Sauvage*, at the barrier de la Vilette. "I will go and get some cash," said he, "and we will start."

But people have not always at hand the money they want. Father Charpentier, who, doubtless, had been mistaken in his hopes, did not return till evening, when he brought the moderate sum of three francs, fifty centimes, and an *arlequin**, which he had purchased as he came along in the Rue Saint-Jean. It was in a handkerchief begrimed with snuff that he had placed this disgusting gallimaufry, and laying it at the foot of the bed, he said to Henriette, "Here, my girl, take it, cash is low to-day, we will not go to the barrier, but go and get us two quarts of wine at sixteen sous, a loaf, two sous worth of oil, ditto vinegar, to make a *persillade*, (at the same time looking at the *arlequin* with the eyes of a sensualist): there are some famous cuts of beef there, he observed; "come, run my lass, and return quickly."

Henriette was active, and did not keep us waiting. The *vinaigrette* was soon ready, and I pretended to lick my fingers at the sight of it. When we return from *there*, we must not be hard to please, so whilst we were dispatching it, the father said to me:

"Well, my lad, if thou hadst had such at the *pré*, (Bagne) every day would have been a Sunday with thee."

With cocks of the same feather, a quarter of an hour produces close intimacy. Before we opened the second bottle, I was with Henriette and her father-in-law, as if we had not been separated for ten years.

* They call *arlequins* small lumps of mixed meats, which they sell in the market for the cats, dogs, and poor. They are the relics collected from the plates of the rich, and from the restaurateurs.

The man was an old scoundrel, a fellow for any thing, had he still been capable of doing. I agreed with him that he should put me on terms with some friends, and the next day he brought me one *Martinot*, called the *Estomac de Poulet*. He came to the point with me, and talked of a little affair which would help to start me again.

"Ah!" said I, "I will not expose myself for such trifling booty: I think this is not worth the risk."

"In that case," replied Martinot, "I have what will suit you, but it will not be ripe for a few days; the keys are not made; as soon as we have them, you shall join us, you may rely on it."

I thanked Martinot, and he brought to me three other "prigs" who were to work with us. I began to be somewhat fearful, lest I might be brought in contact with some one who would disconcert my projects, and I took care not to go out with my new party. I remained with Henriette during the greater part of the day, and in the evening we went together to the corner of the Rue Grenétat, to a vintner's, where we spent thirty sous, which she had earned at glove making.

Annette could serve me in this intrigue in which I had embarked, and I resolved to give her a part to play, if need might be. I went secretly to tell her, and in the evening when we entered the cabaret, we saw seated alone, at a table, a female who was just about to sup. It was Annette. I looked at her with a kind of curiosity. She did the same. I asked Henriette if she knew the person who examined us so attentively.

"I know nothing of her," she replied. "It is at me then she is looking: I have some idea of having seen her somewhere, but do not remember where."

That I might ascertain the point, I accosted the stranger with "Pardon me, madame, but I think I have the pleasure of knowing you."

"Really, sir, I was thinking who you could be. That, said I to myself, is a face I have seen somewhere. Have you ever lived at Rouen?"

"Good heavens!" I exclaimed, "is it you, Josephine?—and your man, dear Romain?"

"Alas!" said she sobbing, "he is *sick* at *Canelle*," (in confinement at Caen).

"How long?"

"Three months, and I am afraid he will not soon get away; he has a *high fear*, (imprisoned on a serious affair); and you are *well*, (free) it appears?"

"Yes, well, but who knows how soon I may fall sick again?"

"Let us hope not."

Henriette was enchanted at the amiable appearance of the lady, and was desirous of her company. At last we all agreed so well, that we resolved to be henceforward like the fingers on a hand, like three heads in one cap, or three bodies in one shirt. The pretended Josephine, at the conclusion of an affecting tale which drew tears from Henriette, told us that she was lodging in a furnished house in the Rue Guerin, Boisseau. After we had exchanged addresses, she said to me, "Ah! now hear me. You know that once you obliged my lad with a twenty franc piece, and it is but just that I should now return it to you."

I made some difficulty about accepting the twenty francs, but at length consented, and Henriette, whom this proceeding touched more than even the tale she had heard, entered into a long conversation with the honest moiety of my friend; the conversation turned on myself.

"Such as you see him," said the ci-devant spouse of Charpentier, pointing to me, "I would not exchange him for another, though he were ten times handsomer. He is my poor rabbit: we have been together these ten years, and, would you believe it, we have never had the slightest word?"

Annette played her portion of this comedy to admiration. Every evening she was punctual to the rendezvous, and we supped together. At length the moment arrived when we were to perpetrate the robbery,

in which I was to join. All was ready. Martinot and his friends were prepared. It was the room of a money-vender which they proposed to empty. They told me the spot, in the Rue Montorgueil, and the very house they had fixed on to make their entrance. I gave Annette the requisite instructions, that she might warn the police; and that I might be sure they attempted nothing without me, I neither quitted them nor my dear Henriette.

We started on the expedition. Martinot went up, opened the door, and came down again.

"We have nothing to do but to enter," said he; and whilst he and I remained on the look out, his comrades ran up to get the booty for themselves and us, at the expense of the usurer. But the agents were at their heels; I saw them, and at the moment determined to do something which would distract Martinot's attention, and make him turn his head another way.

The three thieves, surprised whilst they were breaking open the locks, cried out, and we took to our heels. Martinot having carried off the keys, his companions thus escaped the punishment of fetters, for it was probable, according to their custom, they would allege they had found the door open; it was necessary therefore to have Martinot apprehended with the keys on him, as well as to establish his connexion with the criminals they had already apprehended. It was to effect this that Annette was of the greatest use to me. Martinot was esized with all the necessary proofs for his conviction, without Henriette's conceiving the slightest suspicion; she only saw that I was very happy, and that gave me an additional title to her love. When the sentiment with which I inspired her was at its highest, I had to put it to the test by an illness at command. I could not recover my health but by the purchase of medicines, the price of which were not proportioned to our pecuniary means. Henriette insisted on procuring them, and, "on hospitable thoughts intent," premeditated a little bit of priggery, *à la cambrioleuse*, which she entrusted to me. Rosalie

Dubost was to aid her;* the robbery was attempted, and the execution of it was commenced. But I had quenched the match. Henriette and her friend underwent the consequences of being caught in the very fact, and were both sentenced to ten years of hard labour. At the expiry of her sentence, Henriette came to my house *en surveillance;* she might with justice have reproached me, but never did so.

Henriette, Rosalie Dubost, and Martinot were poor cambrioleurs, but there are of this class thieves of incredible effrontery; that of one Beaumont almost surpasses belief. Escaped from the Bagne at Rochefort, where he was sentenced to pass twelve years of his life, he came to Paris, and scarcely had he arrived there, where he had already practised, when, by way of getting his hand in, he committed several trifling robberies, and when by these preliminary steps he had proceeded to exploits more worthy of his ancient renown, he conceived the project of stealing a treasure. No one will imagine that this treasure was that of the *Bureau Central* (Central Office), now the Prefecture of Police!! It was already pretty difficult to procure impressions of the keys, but he achieved this first difficulty, and soon had in his possession all the means of effecting an opening; but to open was nothing, it was necessary to open without being perceived, to introduce himself without fear of being disturbed, to work without witnesses, and go out again freely. Beaumont, who had calculated all the difficulties that opposed him, was not dismayed. He had remarked that the private room of the chief officer, M. Henri, was nigh to the spot where he proposed to effect his entrance; he espied the propitious moment, and wished sincerely that some circumstance would call away so dangerous a neighbour for some time, and chance was subservient to his wishes.

One morning, M. Henri was obliged to go out. Beaumont, sure that he would not return that day, ran to his house, put on a black coat, and in that costume, which, in those days, always announced a magistrate,

or public functionary, presents himself at the entrance of the *Bureau Central*. The officer to whom he addressed himself supposed, of course, that he was at least a commissary. On the invitation of Beaumont, he gave him a soldier, whom he placed as sentinel at the entrance to the narrow passage which leads to the depôt, and commanded not to allow any person to pass. No better expedient could be found for preventing surprise. Thus Beaumont, in the midst of a crowd of valuable objects, could, at his leisure, and in perfect security, choose what best pleased him: watches, jewels, diamonds, precious stones, &c. He chose those which he deemed most valuable, most portable, and as soon as he had made his selection, he dismissed the sentinel, and disappeared.

This robbery could not be long concealed, and the following day was discovered. Had thunder fallen on the police, they would have been less astonished than at this event. To penetrate to the very sanctuary!—the holy of holies! The fact appeared so very extraordinary, that it was doubted. Yet it was evident that a robbery had taken place, and to whom was it to be attributed? All the suspicions fell on the clerks, sometimes on one, sometimes on another, when Beaumont, betrayed by a friend, was apprehended, and sentenced a second time.

The robbery he had committed might be estimated at some hundred thousand francs, the greater part of which were found on him.

"There was wherewithal," he said, "to become an honest man; I should have become so; it is so easy when rich! yet how many rich men are only scoundrels!"

These words were the only ones he uttered, when he was apprehended. This surprising thief was conducted to Brest; where, after half a dozen escapes, which only served to make his subsequent confinement more rigorous, he died in a frightful state of exhaustion.

Beaumont enjoyed amongst his confraternity a

colossal reputation; and even now, when a rogue boasts of his lofty exploits—

"Hold your tongue," they say, "you are not worthy to untie the shoe-strings of Beaumont!"

In effect, to have robbed the police was the height of address. Is not a robbery of this nature the *chef-d'œuvre* of its kind, and can it do otherwise than make its perpetrator a hero in the eyes of his admirers? Who should dare to compare with him? Beaumont had robbed the police!!! Hang yourself, brave Crillon! hang yourself, Coignard! hang yourself, Pertruisard! hang yourself, Callet!—to him, you are but of Saint-Jean. What is it to have robbed states of service? to have carried off the treasure of the army of the Rhine? to have carried off the military chest?—Beaumont had robbed the police! Hang yourselves!—or go to England, they will hang you there.

CHAPTER L.

Capdeville, or Monsieur Proteus—The false farmer-general—Simplicity of M. Seguin—'Hay in the boots'—The widow well guarded—Perseverance—Monsieur *Fierval*—A walk—The lover of nature—The fortunate country!—The universal panacea—The fountain of jouvence—One pinch, two pinches; how to make use of them—Miraculous virtues of the *toute-bonne*—Great herborization—'Culling of simples'—I shall be Rosière—The Circé of Saint Germain—Stop thief! murder! guard! fire!—A hole—A great discovery—Disappointment of a broker—The candid avowal—Look to your armchairs.

One of the most adroit cambrioleurs was *Le petit Godet*, alias the *Marquis*, alias *Durand*, alias *Capdeville;* and it would be an endless undertaking were I to recapitulate here all the names and all the forms he has assumed in the course of his long career. He was by turns, merchant, privateer, emigrant, *rentier**, &c. &c. After having played one of the most prominent characters in the bands that so long infested the south of France, he had betaken himself for refuge to Rouen, where, in consequence of a robbery attributed to him, he was recognized, and sentenced to the gallies for life. It was the seventh or eighth time he had been condemned.

Capdeville had, as his principal henchmen, three other thieves, *Delsone*, *Fiancette*, and *Colonge*, whose names deserve to be cited in the general history of arrant knaves.

He had embarked very young in his profession; and nearly sixty, he still carried it on. He was a respectable looking man: large stomach, good face, experience of the world; nothing failed him that could inspire confidence at first sight. He had, moreover, considerable tact; and knew well the power of habit.

* A person possessing an income arising from the *rentes* or funds.

To say that his appearance was that of a farmer-general or ex-contractor, I ought not to have seen the illustrious M. Seguin in all the simplicity of his costume. That I may lead no person into error, I renounce the comparison, and imagine that I shall be understood when I have related that this crafty rogue had all the satisfactory appearance of those particular, elderly worthies, whose neat and precise dress leads us to believe that they have made the most of their opportunities,—*qu'ils ont du foin dans leurs bottes.*

Few cambrioleurs were more enterprising, or endowed with greater perseverance. One day the idea occurred to him of robbing a rich widow, who lived at Saint Germaine-en-Laye, Rue du *Pateau Juré.* He first explored the approaches of the place, and in vain attempted to get access. He excelled in making false keys; but false keys are not chance work, and he could not by any mode procure the shadow of the impression of the keys. Two months elapsed in fruitless attempts; any other man but Capdeville would have abandoned in despair an enterprise which presented so many apparently insurmountable difficulties; but Capdeville had said, 'I will succeed,' and he would not have it said that he lied. A house contiguous to that of the widow was occupied by a lodger; he contrived to get him sent away, and soon installed himself in his place.

Monsieur *Fierval* was the new neighbour of the widow. By Jove! say the people in the vicinity, he is not like his predecessor; he has magnificent furniture; and it is easy to see that he is somebody. He had dwelt there about three weeks, when his lady neighbour, who had not taken the air for a long time, determined on taking a walk, and went into the Park, accompanied by Marie, her faithful servant. Just as she had terminated this pastoral excursion, she was met by a stranger in the attire of a disciple of Linnæus and Tournefort, who accosted her, holding in one hand his hat, in the other a plant.

"You see, madam, before you a lover of nature, of that lovely nature with which all noble and tender souls have been captivated; botany, madam, botany is my passion!—it was also that of the sensible Jean Jacques; of the virtuous Bernardin Saint Pierre. After the example of those great philosophers, I 'cull simples;' and if I do not deceive myself, I shall be fortunate enough to meet with some in this province extremely valuable. Ah, madam, it would be indeed desirable for the benefit of humanity that all the world knew the virtues of this. Do you know this herb?"

"Really, sir, it is not very rare in the environs; but I confess my ignorance of it; I neither know its name nor its qualities."

"It is not very rare, do you say? Oh fortunate country! It is really not scarce? Would you be so very obliging as to tell me the places where it grows in the greatest plenty?"

"Willingly, sir; but be so kind as to tell me the use of this herb?"

"Its use, madam! For every thing—it is a real treasure, an universal panacea. With this herb there is no occasion to make medicines: taken as a decoction, the root purifies the mass of the blood, drives away evil humours, promotes circulation, dissipates melancholy, gives suppleness to the limbs, play to the muscles, and cures all complaints to a hundred years old. As an infusion, the stalk performs wonders: a handful in a bath, and continue the use of it, you will have discovered the fountain of Jouvence; the leaf on a wound cicatrizes it instantly."

"And its flower?"

"Ah, its flower! Here, madam, is reason to bless Providence, if ladies but knew its powers: it is a flower of virginity, and with it there are no widows."

"It would make me find a husband?"

"Better than that, madam; it would make you as though you never had one: one pinch, two pinches, three pinches, and the thing is done."

"What a wonderful flower!"

"You have reason to call it so: but in addition, it is possible to make a philtre of it of a most powerful nature against indifference in the matter of marriage."

"You are joking, sir?"

"No, madam; Heaven preserve me from so doing! A lotion on the one hand, a beverage: the whole secret consists in the mode of preparation, and the manner of using it."

"Would it be an improper or rude request to ask you for the receipt?"

"Not at all, madam: ask, and I will with pleasure tell you all you desire to know."

"Ah! first tell me the name of this valuable simple."

"The name, madam, is simply the *toute-bonne*, which we call also the *bonne à tout*."

"Marie, the *bonne à tout*, do you hear? You must remember it—the *bonne à tout*. If we conduct this gentleman to the further end of the park, I think they grow there in abundance."

"If it were not so far, I would take you where it grows in abundance—there are quantities, large quantities of it. It is like dog's grass: I have sometimes gathered large armfuls. See how little one knows: it is that perhaps which rabbits—— But, sir, perhaps you would not like to go so far?"

"I would go to the end of the world, only that I am fearful of abusing your complaisance."

"Oh! do not fear that, sir,—do not fear. I shall be sufficiently paid, since you will consent to go."

"Oh yes! that is right. I did not think——"

Marie guided the culler of simples; who on the road explained to the lady how to make infusions, decoctions, applications, lotions, and the sublime matrimonial essence. At length they reach the spot: never did botanist behold in such quantities the plant whose merits he had so greatly expatiated upon. He was transported with joy, enthusiasm, pleasure; and when he had been in extacies for a pretty considerable time,

he began to gather it. The lady made her collection too, of which Marie took charge. They herborized to such an extreme, that in less than twenty minutes the poor girl bent under her burden, but did not complain. She proposed to herself even to return then; for Marie had not lost a word of the pharmaceutical lesson, and was not less desirous of trying its virtues than her mistress. Deceived by two soldiers, one after the other, she was looking out for a third; and then they talked of having a *rosière* at the next fête of the patron saint, and the choice should fall on her. Under these circumstances, if Marie is not crowned, she might certainly, without blushing, have got her hat ready, and have formed the happiness of her lover by a marriage without precedents. This hope gave her strength. Madame exerts herself amazingly, and the herborization is quickly terminated; then the botanist and the widow separated, after having exchanged compliments. The botanist flew away with new discoveries; and the Circé of Saint Germain en Laye regained her home with her servant,—proud of bearing, for the first time, a bundle of hay full of beauty, health, wisdom, charms, enchantments, &c.

They reached the house. So long a walk had created an appetite in the lady.

"Quick, quick, Marie, bring in the tray and let us have dinner."

"But, madam, there is nothing ready."

"Never mind, we will eat some cold meat. Bring the cold chickens of yesterday, and fry me a whiting or two."

Marie, who was no less hungry than her mistress, hastened to execute her orders.

"*Ah! Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!*"

"Marie, do not cry out in that way: you quite startle me."

"Ah, madame!"

"What ails you, Marie? Have you broken your leg?"

"The plate——"

"Well, the plate."

"We have been robbed!"

"You are mad!"

"I swear it."

"Hold your tongue, you careless girl. When washing your silver, you left a spoon behind you in the water. If I come, I will be bound I will lay my hand upon it."

"Ah, madam! they have all been taken."

"What say you?"

"Can you believe it? They have all been carried off!"

"All carried off! Are you sure of it—all carried off? You are crazy, my poor Marie!"

On saying this, the widow rose angrily, ran to the drawer, and, pushing Marie away somewhat roughly—

"Get away, you foolish thing. Good heaven! what a misfortune! Oh, the wretches! oh, the villains! oh, the infamous creatures! But stir yourself, Marie! stir yourself! you stand there like a mummy. So she won't move, the stupid wench! what! does nothing but milk run in your veins?"

"Yes, madam, but what would you have me do?"

"This is one of your stupid doings. I told you fifty times to shut the door, and whilst you just turned your back they entered at the dining-room. That is the way. On our return the safety-bolt was not as when we left it. As for me, I will undertake that no one shall ever rob me. It should never be my fault. When I go out or when I come in, my keys never leave my side; but you!—Six thousand francs value of plate!—a pretty day's work you have made of it. I cannot think what has come to you. There, get out of my sight, get out of my sight, you dolt, when I tell you."

Marie, thunderstruck, went into the next apartment, but returned in an instant, crying out—"Good heavens! your room has been forced, the secretary is broken open, and every thing is topsy turvy."

The widow hastened to see if Marie had not deceived

her; the catastrophe was but too cruel; with one glance she saw its full extent, and then groaned out,—"The monsters,—I am ruined!" and fainted on the ground.

Marie ran to a window, and shrieked out for assistance—"Thieves! murder! guard! fire! Such were the alarming words which resounded through the Rue de Pateau. The inhabitants, the gendarmes, the commissary, flocked to the house: from the ground-floor to the garret, they made a strict search, but found no person. Then one of the assistants proposed to descend to the cellar. "To the cellar, to the cellar," was unanimously echoed.

They lighted a candle, and, whilst Marie was administering to her mistress, who had recovered her senses, the commissary, preceded by the men with the lights, made the projected descent.

They entered the first cellar, nothing; the second, nothing yet; the third, which was contiguous to that of the neighbour, on the ground were some fragments of plaster. They advanced, and in the party-wall they saw—an opening large enough for the passage of a man. This explained the whole. Two hours before they had observed a carriage at the door of the stout gentleman from Paris. Him they designated Capdeville; who, it was stated, had got into it after having deposited therein a portmanteau, which appeared very heavy. This portmanteau contained the gold, silver, jewels, and plate of the widow, amounting in value to a considerable sum. Capdeville did not make his appearance again, and it was not possible to overtake him. Only a few days after, a person appeared to claim the furniture which decorated his apartment. Who made this claim? An agent of Capdeville? No, the broker who had sold to him on credit. They told him the whole story of the *toute bonne*.

The widow whom he went to see, showed him her bundle of hay.

"Ah!" said he, looking at the testimony of a cruel mystification, "I have only one regret."

"What is that?"

"It is, that I did not put four times as much more in his arm-chairs: but they may open the cushions, and if they find a single hair——"

From this regret springs a great truth;—that all cullers of simples are not in the park of Saint-Germain. If our horses have short tails, it is not owing to the brokers in the Rue de Cléry; if they have long and sharp teeth, it is another thing. These gentlemen have raised the price of forage.

CHAPTER LI.

A visit to Rouen—Disgust of the world—Whims of a misanthrope—Choice of a solitude—Poets and hermits, *nam secessum et otia quærunt.*—Plan of an excursion—Strange scruple—The love of patrimony—The feigned departure—The danger of dining at Paris—The impressions and false keys—He returns not—In whom can we place confidence?

Capdeville, after having despoiled the widow, went direct to Rouen, but speedily returned to Paris. However, he did not fix his residence there. A prey to domestic vexations, disgusted with the world and its perfidies, discontented with his health, himself, and others, Capdeville was a misanthrope, who anxiously desired to bury himself in the country, and with this intent traversed the environs of the capital. At Belleville he saw a house, whose insulated situation suited his love of solitude. It was in the shades of this place that henceforward he would seek to feed his melancholy, and breathe forth the sighs of a suffering and oppressed soul.

Capdeville hired an apartment in the house on which his looks had so affectionately reposed: but a misanthrope cannot long preserve his solitude under the

same roof with other human beings. He needs a house where he can be in ignorance that any living being is on earth's surface but himself. This he felt, and in consequence felt a desire to procure it at any rate: no matter how high the price, provided that he sees no vestige of that society of which he has so much reason to complain. He will put up with any thing,—a castle or a cot.

Capdeville published his intention of going out to discover an hermitage where he could pass his latter days in peace. He inquired of all the country proprietors who had places for sale within a circuit of six leagues, and it was soon known through the country that he was on the look-out for a place of the kind. Everybody knew, of course, something that would suit him, but he would have only a patrimonial estate. "Well, well," said they, "since he is so scrupulous, let him look out for himself." This, in fact, he did.

Determined to make a tour, to examine what was most likely to suit him, he employed himself ostensibly in preparations for his departure; he was only to be absent three or four days, but before he departed, he was anxious to know if there was no danger in leaving a secretary, in which were ten thousand francs, which he did not wish to take with him. Being assured on this point, and full of security, he did not hesitate to set out on his proposed journey.

Capdeville did not go to a very great distance. During his sojourn in the house he had just left, he had had time to take impressions of all the keys which were requisite for his entrance into the dwelling of the landlord, who he knew was in the habit of dining in Paris, and did not return very early in the evening. By being there at dusk, Capdeville was certain of having before him all the time necessary for carrying on his operations. The sun had set, and, favoured by the darkness, he passed unperceived through Belleville, and having entered the house by help of false keys, he entered the abode of the landlord, which he cleared out even to the linen.

Towards the end of the fifth day they began to be uneasy at the non-appearance of the misanthrope; the next day a suspicion arose. Twenty-four hours later, and there was but one opinion respecting him; he was the thief. After such a trick mistrust all misanthropes. To whom then shall we trust, in whom place confidence? In philanthropists? By no means.

CHAPTER LII.

Adèle d'Escars.—The first step.—Borrowed name.—Fatal inscription.—The office of manners and the crown-piece.—The *ladies of the house* and the resting-place.—*Honour is like an island.*—The measure of the prefect and the claws of Satan.—A public avowal.—The despair of parents.—M. de Belleyme.—The thieves *en herbe.*—The chapter of cambrioleurs.—Good head and good heart.—Liberal allowances.—A privation.

One of the most daring cambrioleuses was named Adèle d'Escars. I never saw a handsomer woman. She seemed to have been formed on the model of one of those divine Madonnas glowing from the pencil of Rafaello. Splendid fair locks, large blue eyes, which expressed all the sweetness of the soul; a delicious mouth; features beaming with candour; a graceful carriage, and an elegance almost aërial; such were the beauties which concentrated in Adèle. In mind, she was an accomplished woman—in morals, whether it was from the effect of bad disposition, or of chance, she did not shine with such perfection.

Adèle belonged to a family honest, but confined in means. Scarcely had she attained her fourteenth year when, decoyed from her parents by one of those harridans who infest Paris, she was put in a notorious brothel. Without reference to those finished perfections of her form calculated to inspire voluptuous desires, it might be said of Adèle that she was a woman; she was a child as far as that primitive naïveté which knows not the distinction between vice and virtue, and thus it was no difficult matter to lead her into the abyss. That she might elude the search of her family, she first consented to change her name; and that her extreme youth might not throw obstacles in the way of the infamous wretch who was about to make a sale of her charms, she made herself older than she was.

Adèle, taken to the prefecture of police, was then

inscribed according to custom, without the gentlemen of the *Bureau des mœurs* making any other remarks than those which are ordinarily made by shameless libertines.

For a crown-piece, and doubtless the usual dram which, under such circumstances, the regulators of corruption do not fail to claim, she was provided with the privilege of prostituting herself. Will it be believed that it was in the hotel of a magistrate charged with the office of repressing social depravities, that this *Bureau des mœurs* existed, where a young girl whom frequently the least remonstrance would have awakened to a sense of modesty, could at any and at all times obtain authority for exercising the most infamous of practices and trades? A *Bureau des mœurs* where they gave a licence for setting all decorum and propriety at defiance; a prefect, under whose auspices this licence was granted—what morality! and yet this prefect was generally one of your pious men!

A young creature misled by corrupt advice, by offended feeling, by a momentary despair, flung herself headlong into lamentable resolutions; it was the impulse of a hot head, an inspiration of the devil. Reflection, time, difficulties would have changed the current of her ideas, but the *Bureau des mœurs* was close at hand. To be sure it was necessary for the pleasure of the police agents, their protectors, or their tyrants, that the *ladies of the house* should acquire a settlement in the country; that they should be rich enough to treat them and purchase their good offices by bribes: therefore was it necessary to collect novelty, for that only makes these establishments prosperous. Had there been any considerations, formalities, delays, questions to be asked of the aspirants who presented themselves, they might have been turned from the paths of evil; but in France there are no painful or repulsive intermediary modes, only to reach or return to well doing.

The young female presented herself at the *Bureau*

des mœurs, a register was open, and without any previous information, she was entered therein by name, and the age which they pleased to assign to her: described, measured, visited, she was from that instant irrevocably rendered up to prostitution; and however great her subsequent repentance, she was not admitted to abjure her error, or separate herself from the foul opprobrium which clung to her.

The gentlemen inspectors of manners, who had granted her the leave and liberty to dishonour and degrade herself, did not permit her to amend; her dishonour was their work. To escape their jurisdiction and leave the claws of Satan, there were so many formalities to undergo, so many persons were to be summoned to attest and guarantee continuance of good conduct, that the return to a proper and correct mode of life was next to impossible.

The unfortunate woman who had once enrolled herself, could not extricate herself but by being surrounded with the confidents of her shame, and in society whither she returned, at each moment, at each step, she was exposed to the chance of meeting with reminiscences of her avowal. The entry was easy, secret, the parents or guardians were not consulted; the avowal was public, accorded by established citizens, and pronounced after proofs entirely incompatible with the torments of that arbitrary power which does not cease to menace a courtezan, even when in fact and with her full wish she has renounced the habits and paths of prostitution.

Here the simple declaration of a woman, who is anxious no longer to devote herself to the wretched infamy of a life of prostitution, should be sufficient; for to procure the means of work, it is necessary that the course of her past life should be concealed; the police, on the contrary, requires that it should be blazoned forth to the noonday sun; it insists that her disgrace shall be perpetual, the leprous spot indelible. It favoured, it courted her perversion; does not justice say

that she must oppose, by every means in her power, any modes which tend to diminish the number of the subjects?

I say it is Satan who furiously rages to hold his prey. I have seen the savage way in which the inspectors of prostitutes drag forth, even from the workshops, those who, without giving the formal notice required, had determined on forsaking their flag; the prettier, the younger they were, the more bent were these fellows on claiming them. I have seen the eagerness with which a new comer was accepted at this execrable *Bureau des mœurs*, when paternal authority was the most contemned of all.

The neophyte appeared alone, or only with the "abbess."

"Your name?"

"Adèle."

"Your age?"

"Eighteen."

"Good! Ah, Mother Chauvin, you are the woman to get hold of the girls. The young one is pretty! I see she casts her eye down. That is all well. You know the bureau must have its rights. No nonsense; you know, *manners* before anything! the commissary next; he has the time. Do you observe, gents, the brilliancy, the bloom, the fall of the loins, the graceful air? Oh, when she is polished up a little, she will be a tit-bit."

During this address, and many others equally unsuited to the place and circumstances, a father and mother, with their hearts bursting with grief, were at the second division, beseeching the chief to institute a search for their daughter, who had run away from them. They thought their child far off: it was she whom, under a borrowed name, the *Bureau des mœurs* had for ever rendered an outcast from home and from society. Poor parents! how did they jest at your sorrow!

M. de Belleyme has now effected many reforms. The tax on prostitutes no longer forms a portion of the

revenues of the police, but the ancient abuses exist in all their plenitude, and the digression we have just read is not out of place or season.

I return to Adèle d'Escars. Once in the career into which she had been tempted, Adèle rapidly went through all its vicissitudes. At first, to preserve the good graces of the gentlemen of the *Bureau des mœurs*, she was compelled to be complaisant towards them, and her first lovers were spies. At that period, as at the present day, spies and thieves of renown were the sultans of the public harems; both reigned there with despotic authority; whatever they willed, the "Mother" did not refuse: for in the police agents she saw her legal authority, and in the thieves her purveyors: on both sides they were the supporters she looked to and obeyed. Let it be noted in our tablets that every individual who plays the despot towards a courtezan, and defends her when summoned from and against all, if he be not a police agent, is always either a robber by profession, or a robber *en hèrbe*.

Adèle only ceased to be sought by the policemen to be under the law of *Guillaume*, *Lerouge*, *Victor-des-Bois*, *Coco-la-Cour*, and *Poillier*, who by turns constrained her to become their mistress. It was in their society that she familiarized herself to the idea of robbery; she had some scruples, but they insensibly succeeded in obviating and removing them. They pointed out to her the advantages of this industry they exercised, and this industry she followed. Her first essays were brilliant; she did not begin as others have done by taking a watch or purse, that would have been, as they say, to play with trifles at the threshold, and Adèle carried her views higher. Amongst her lovers many excelled in the art of making false keys. She began to acquire their dangerous skill, and made in that way progress so rapid that she soon had a deliberative voice in the chapter or assembly of cambrioleurs, who allied her to them in their expeditions.

Adèle very soon acquired the reputation of an ad-

mirable head-piece: some accidents more or less severe that had befallen her friends, gave her the opportunity of proving that her heart was equally good: all recognized in her that virtue in their line of life which they term *probity*. She never abandoned him amongst them who underwent the robber's fate.

If a sentence separated her from a lover, she always chose one of his most tried and faithful comrades to replace his loss, but he only became her knight on condition that he would not prevent her from assisting the unfortunate prisoner. Adèle had thus a string of attachments, the objects of which, equally cherished and beloved, at length were sent to the Bagnes, or at least cast into prison. To comfort their lot, she redoubled her courage and skill. However, the number of these pensioners increased so rapidly, that, not to be compelled to suppress their allowances, which would have detracted from her reputation for probity, she was compelled to submit to a very cruel privation. A lover is an associate to whom it is necessary in a division of prey to adjudge the lion's share. She had no more lovers. Adèle had sufficient experience to get rid of a fellow-labourer. She then flew with her own wings, and worked alone for two years with incredible good fortune; everything succeeded to her wish. At length the moment arrived when a lucky hit, surpassing all her hopes, made her experience for the first time the embarrassment of wealth.

CHAPTER LIII.

The pangs of solitude—Love—Living as man and wife—The excellent pupil—A first attempt—The breaking in—Where the Devil is the money?—Compensation—A scene of enthusiasm—Life is a bed of eiderdown, full of pleasure—The danger of opposite windows—The perfidious curtains—The reflection—A bedroom hussar—The crusade—The window blinds of curiosity—The judge's beard—A chance occurrence—Sixteen year's imprisonment.

Adele seeing herself *uppish* in the world, felt all the pangs of the solitude to which she had resigned herself. She experienced a void which she could not account for, or, rather, which she defined so well, and thus she determined on listening to the first gallant who should come and declare his passion to her, provided always and nevertheless that this said gallant should be a man to her taste. The one who pleased her most, to whom she was equally pleasing, was one Rigottier, the most amiable of billiard swindlers.

It was after a pool, in which he came off conqueror, that he put in her hands a love-letter, stuffed with the expressions which love had inspired, for Rigottier was really enamoured of her. Adèle, who before was dying with fear lest she should be compelled to make the first advances, received his declaration, and the joy of her triumph took care not to let her swain sigh out his life in useless and pitiable lamentations. By pitying herself she pitied him, and as sympathy was manifest, their coming together took place immediately, without the intervention of any officer of the civil law.

Adèle could not be ignorant that a woman ought to have nothing concealed from her husband, and had no sooner united her lot with Rigottier, than she hastened to evince to him her little talents, and all the profit she drew from them. He was enchanted at the skill with which she handled the file. He wished to try if he

had any talents that way. Adèle found that he had, and cultivated them; and as lessons never are profitable or more quickly learnt, than when communicated by one we adore, in a very short time Rigottier knew how to make a key with as much perfection as the most expert of locksmiths. Most certainly, in following on a green cloth the chance of a cue, to which fortune is too frequently unfaithful, Rigottier had not worked at his vocation; Adèle undertook to direct him into it, and the most perfect success crowned his efforts. Nevertheless she would not allow him to venture before he was perfectly master of his craft, so much did she fear that some clumsy trick might ruin him. At first she only took him with her to keep watch, but afterwards, at some expeditions at which he had only looked on with folded arms, it was agreed that he should have henceforward a finger in the pie.

A lady, who was reckoned rich, resided in the Rue de la Feronnerie. She had a good deal of money, her maid said, and Adèle projected to make it change owners. The keys were already made, and operated magically; to make a right use of them it was only necessary to seize on the propitious moment. The maid had promised to let Adèle know when her mistress went out, and she kept her word. One day she came and told her that her mistress would go out in the evening, and forthwith they concerted the plan of operation.

"Come," said Adèle to her pupil, "we cannot recede now; you shall go in with me, I wish to see how you will begin; it is a splendid affair; no better could be chosen for your first attempt."

Rigottier did not recede; he went with Adèle, and as soon as they were certain that the lady had gone out, they went up to her apartment, which they entered without difficulty, and once within, that they might feel themselves at home, they fastened the bolts, and then leisurely proceeded to open all the places which they supposed contained the money: a secretary, two chests, a wardrobe, a bookcase, and many other

pieces of furniture were broken open, but nowhere did they find the cash mentioned by the female servant. Where could it be? A note which met their eyes informed them that it had gone to the notary's. This was enough to make them tear their hair and rend their garments; but far from abandoning themselves to despair that was fruitless, the deceived pair, surveying with a glance the many valuables around them, judged that from the bosom of this disorder there might arise a mass of objects that could comfort and even compensate them; and there being still wherewithal to recompense, they selected some jewellery, plate, lace, and linen.

In an instant they arranged all, and had carefully collected everything that was valuable, and made packets of them; the bolt was drawn back, and they were about to depart. Adèle, transported with satisfaction, threw her arms around her lover's neck and embraced him. Rigottier was worthy of her; she had admired his coolness, and could not sufficiently praise the steadiness with which he had seconded her. In her enthusiasm she embraced him again; one kiss called for another—Rigottier repaid her tenfold; the exchange was rapid, it was a rolling fire, it intoxicates them, they abandon themselves to it, they forget themselves. They are not on earth; there were no more gendarmes, no more spies, no more laws, tribunals, remembrances, cautions; love dispels all dangers—the thunder may fall, the ceiling may crush them, the house may give way, the universe may be swallowed up, the pair see, hear nothing.

Et si fractus illabatur orbis impavidum ferient ruinæ.

Adèle and Rigottier were no longer of this world; for them life had no thorns, no asperities, no bitterness, life is of eiderdown, and filled with delights. This may be so; but in Paris the streets have two sides of the way, and it is sometimes prudent to think of the inconvenience of opposite neighbours. The lady whose absence caused so profound a security, had not gone far away. Opposite to her own apartment, and exactly on

the same story, lived one of her friends. She had gone to see her, and make one at a party of Boston, when suddenly, whilst somebody was shuffling the cards, her eyes were mechanically directed towards one of her own windows.

"Ah, ladies," she cried, "something very extraordinary is going on in my bed-room."

"What's the matter? What's the matter?"

"Do you perceive that there is a light?'

"You are mistaken, it is only the reflection."

"What do you say, reflection? I am not blind, I see it moving."

"Yes, stirring; that is always your way."

"Oh, indeed! this time you will say it is no illusion. There, there, M. Planard, look; do you see the curtain at the window near my bed dancing?"

"You are right, I certainly see a peculiar movement."

"It increases—the fringes, the valance, all tremble, all is agitated; if it continues, the canopy will fall down."

"It does not cease; what the devil can it be? they may be thieves.

"Thieves! ah, my dear M. Planard, you open my eyes. Good God, they are thieves; quick, quick, let us go down."

"Let us go down, let us go down," repeated all the company, and each, according to his or her respective degrees of agility, jumped down the stairs by twos, by threes, and even by fours, to get down quickly.

The lady whose apartment had been visited without her knowledge was more trembling, more agitated than her curtains. She pushed open the small door of her porter's lodge.

"My flambeau, my flambeau," she exclaimed with impatience, mingled with trouble; "pray make haste, you will get a light to-morrow."

"Do you wish it to run?"

"I tell you there are thieves in the house."

"Thieves."

"Yes, thieves!"

"Where are they?

"In my apartment."

"In your apartment, Madame Bourgeois? in your apartment? you are joking."

"No, indeed, I do not joke; run quickly and call the principal."

"M. Desloyers? I will."

"Beg him to be so good as to come as soon as possible."

The porter hastened to fulfil his mission, and was not slow in returning accompanied by M. Desloyers, who, at the single word thief, had already taken his measures of attack. Like a regular bed-room hussar, he had not put off his night-gown or cotton cap; his spectacles had replaced the protectors of green gauze; he had slipped on his stockings, and tied his garters, and was armed with a spit which he had seized as he came through the kitchen.

"Ah, ah!" my friends, said he, "prudence and no noise. We must go up, must we not? Chut, chut! I think I hear—it is a carriage. A moment: do nothing hastily. Everybody must take their shoes off. Chut, chut! You, Monsieur Tripot, (he addressed the porter,) as there may be numbers to oppose, take your stick; Madame Tripot, take your broom handle; and mademoiselle had better get the frying-pan; the ladies can have a chair each to attack the enemy. Now for the avant guard. I will undertake to protect the retreat; and if there be any resistance, I will betake myself wherever it may be best for me to take refuge. I am understood; and let the arrangements thus proceed: come, precede me, I will follow."

The whole party huddled together, and went up the staircase. On reaching the second flight, they pause—*Chut, there they are!* The porter, who formed the avant guard, quietly introduced the key, and the door yielded. *Ah!* was the general cry of surprise; astonish-

ment and indignation succeeded: a man and woman, broken furniture and parcels, one on the other. What a picture! The ladies, as by a spontaneous movement, placed before their visual organs that discreet hand—that officious screen, which permits curiosity to be satisfied whilst consulting modesty. Outside and inside, all was motionless. Even the active curtains, the performers, the spectators, remain as if petrified: no person spoke, no person said a word, so much were all dumbfounded, so greatly did stupefaction seize on all. The porter was mute also; but he could keep so no longer; and, breaking silence, he said—

"Ah! this is a new go, indeed. The commissary must come, and the beard of the judge must smell it out."

The commissary, exempts, and guard, whom a neighbour had fetched, were not long in appearing. They seized the two lovers. Adèle, the first interrogated, was not at all disconcerted. She protested that her appearance in the room, when she was surprised, was only the effect of a fortuitous accident: she knew nothing of the man with whom she was found in company: she had only seen him once in her life; that as she was a common woman, he had accosted her in the street, and they had entered the house together, believing it was a house of accommodation. A door was open on the staircase, and the opportunity, the time, &c.; besides, she was an utter stranger to the making up of the parcels, and if a robbery was committed she was as innocent of it as the babe unborn, and washed her hands of the affair.

This falsehood was well devised; but Rigottier, with whom Adèle could concert no plan, did not keep to the same text; and from the difference of their statements, resulted a sentence of sixteen years' confinement in irons. Rigottier went with the chain in 1802. Ten years later, I met him on the quays; he had escaped. I apprehended him; and he afterwards died at the Bagne.

CHAPTER LIV.

The fruits of economy—Plan of amendment—The skilful work-woman.—Precarious existence—Consequences of prejudice—The Mont de Piété—Despair—She must die—Cruel punishment—The instruments of crime—Resistance to temptation.

At the termination of her sentence, Adèle left Saint Lazare with a sum of nine hundred francs (nearly 38*l.* English money), the profits of her labour whilst confined. She was completely reformed, and had determined on leading an irrreproachable life. Her first care was to procure a small apartment, which she furnished, and decent apparel. This done, she had one hundred and fifty francs left. This was enough to keep the wolf from the door for a brief space, and yet was but a sorry prospect. She went out in quest of work; and as she was an admirable needle-woman, she found employment very readily. Employed in an establishment for several months, she had every reason to be content with her lot; but the existence of a liberated convict, male or female, is precarious. It was found that she had been shut up in Saint Lazare; and then commenced those troubles from which it is so difficult to escape when once branded with the mark of justice. Adèle, without having in any other way given offence, was unfeelingly dismissed. She changed her quarters, and succeeded in getting again engaged. Placed in charge of the linen at a furnished house, that she might avoid the least chance of committing any indiscretion, she determined to have no fellowship with any persons but those whose confidence she had gained. But in spite of this precaution she could not avoid the reminiscences of past life. Recognised and pointed out, she was again thrust out from home and shelter on a pitiless world. From this day she had no resoure, no chance of doing any thing without experiencing the

effects of that reproach which results from infamy perpetuated by prejudice.

Adèle had no resource but her needle. In vain did she seek to turn it to account: three months elapsed, and she did not meet with one charitable soul who, availing themselves of her skill, would compassionate her situation.

The moment arrived when, to subsist, she was compelled to have recourse to her few goods, and, by a series of petty pledges and pawnings, all the garments in her wardrobe went to the Mont de Piété, that gulf of iniquity, dug by the usurious hypocrite under the feet of the necessitous. Reduced to the most absolute nakedness, Adèle determined on ending her woes by suicide, and she ran to throw herself into the Seine, when on the Pont Neuf she met Suzanne Golier, one of the companions of her confinement. Adèle related her troubles to this friend, who dissuaded her from the resolution she had taken.

"Come now, come now," said Suzanne; "shall we do ill when another is doing well? Come to the house; my sister and I have opened an embroidery shop; we have work and you shall help us, and we will live together. If we have only bread, well! we shall only have bread to eat."

The proposal could not come more propitiously: Adèle accepted it.

It was then the commencement of winter, embroidery was in great request; but at the end of the carnival the dead season set in. At the end of six weeks Adèle and her friends were plunged into the most horrible distress. Frederic, the husband of one of them, was established as a locksmith. Had he been in full business he might have aided them; but unfortunately he did not earn even enough to pay his way, and defray the expenses of his shop: greater penury could not be imagined.

One day Adèle was in the shop of this man, who, for more than forty-eight hours, had not any more than herself taken any sort of nourishment.

"Well," said the locksmith, affecting to joke, whilst he uttered words of the most sinister import,—"we must die, little dears, there is no more prog. Yes, we must die," he repeated; and, whilst he forced a smile, his features were convulsed, and the cold sweat started to his brow. Adèle, silent, and her face overspread with a mortal paleness, was leaning on the shopboard. She suddenly arose, and experienced a vast emotion. "We must die—must we," she breathed out, looking with inconceivable feeling at the tools with which she was surrounded. It was the light of a horrid hope which came across her. Adèle was convulsed and trembling; a burning fever shot through her frame, consumed her: between the cravings of hunger and the terrors of conscience, she endured agony that almost rent her heartstrings. During these tortures, with her hand on a bunch of keys, she thrust them from her.

"Good God," she cried, "take away these instruments of crime! When I have so much desire to do right, shall, must these be my last resource."

And that she might not fall into temptation, the unfortunate creature sought safety by hastily running out.

CHAPTER LV.

The *bureau* of charity—The door of the philanthropist—The dowager's equipage—An accident—The good coalheaver—The committee of succour—The mob in action—The basket-woman's collection—Little people have great virtues—Like master like man—The shirt-sleeve—Victory proclaimed too soon—The grand figure—The exempts—Unheard-of brutality—The carrying off—The carriage departs.

ADELE had heard that in the division where she lived there was an office of charity; there, if benevolence be not a vain name, the poor ought to be relieved and comforted instantly. The desire of maintaining herself honestly reanimated her courage; she summoned all the strength that was left, and dragged herself to the door of the philanthropist, who had been pointed out to her as the dispenser of the alms of her division. Adèle asked to speak to him.

"Monsieur cannot be seen."

"I am dying with hunger."

"Monsieur is at dinner, and will not allow himself to be disturbed during meal times."

"Gracious heaven!—will he soon have finished? When can I return and see him?"

"Oh, to-morrow."

"To-morrow!"

"Not before twelve o'clock, do you understand; Monsieur receives no person sooner."

"Ah, do allow me to see him at least this evening; you will restore me to life!"

"I have already told you it is impossible; go away, and don't tease me or yourself any more about it."

Adèle turned away, and scarcely had she passed over the threshold of the door, which was shut upon her with violence, when her knees sinking under her, she endeavoured to go a few paces, her sight grew feeble, she stumbled, she fell, and in her fall her temple struck against a sharp stone.

"Stop, coachman! stop!—you will crush her."

"Whip away, I tell you! Who ordered you to attend to these plebeians? Whip on, I desire you!" ordered the shrill loud voice of an old crabbed dowager, whose equipage was rattling over the stones.

"The plebeians are in your skin!" replied a coal-heaver; "won't you stop, you old bundle of feathers?" and darting at the horse's head, he stopped them with his powerful hand, whilst some of the passers by, summoned by the noise of the circumstance, dragged from under the wheel of the carriage a female bathed in blood.

The old dowager vowed fire and faggot against the wretches who had dared to intercept her course. She will be too late for the '*Comité des Secours*;'—that was most provoking;—the sitting will have commenced. There is not now in Paris any safety for people of consequence; the passages are all stopped.

"Landan, do your duty, and punish these insolent creatures! Landan, you do not hear me: I am losing time of the utmost consequence, and for whom?—for a wretch—a drunken woman!"

"Does not Madame la Comtesse see that I cannot get forward?"

"Tell the chasseur to take the number of that man's ticket: I will complain to the police, and he shall rot in gaol. Take me to the minister this instant!"

At this threat, the terrified coal-heaver let go the reins, and the carriage of 'Madame la Comtesse,' more rapid than lightning, more terrible than thunder, disappeared in the midst of hootings and maledictions, the impotent clamours of which only excited in her mind rage and contempt.

Adèle was laid on a bench near the door which but the moment before had been shut with so much brutality. Her swoon continued, and she had not recovered the use of her senses; two mechanics supported her. Amongst the spectators whom the event had assembled each tried who could be of most service to

her, or soonest lend her aid. A fishwoman pierced the crowd, tore her chemise to staunch the blood and heal the wound; the fruit-woman at the corner ran with some broth; an errand-boy ran for some wine; and a young milliner hastened to lend her the aid of her bottle of salts. The crowd had become very considerable.

"What's the matter? what's it all about?"

"A woman is taken ill."

"Then send some of the crowd away, make a larger circle round about her; would you stifle her?" and the circle was immediately extended.

Adèle gave no signs of life; she was motionless: some person opened her eye-lid. "The eye looks well! it is only a fainting fit."

"Does her pulse beat?"

"No!"

"Then she is dead. Put your hand on her heart."

"I feel nothing."

"Perhaps something is too tight about her, cut the strings of her clothes."

"She is not cold."

"If there were a doctor he would know what to do."

"They have been to fetch one, but that M. Durpetrin would not come."

There was only a little way for him to come either.

"Oh! if it had been for a rich patient he would soon have been here."

"Let's try again if she will take any broth."

"That's right, mother, try and make her drink a few drops."

"Throw some water in her face."

"There is nothing so dangerous as that, give her some wine rather; that will bring her to."

They put the spoon to Adèle's lips, and the broth passed down her throat. "Ah! so much the better, she will recover;" said the helpers and lookers on with marked satisfaction.

Adèle let fall one of her hands which were lying on her knees, and then breathing the long sigh which

comes from a person whom death oppresses, she opened her eyes widely, but, oppressed with the glare of light, their haggard and sunken looks wandered vaguely about without distinguishing any fixed object. At length a flood of tears flowed down her pallid cheeks.—"How is it with you, my child?" inquired those standing by; but just then Adèle caught sight of the cup which was offered to her, and seizing it with eagerness she greedily lifted it to her parched lips, but her weakened powers refused to aid the longing desire she felt to drain its contents at one draught, and in the fruitless endeavour to fix the glass against her lips, the chattering and convulsive grinding of her teeth overpowered her feeble efforts, and the cup fell from her feeble hands. "Poor soul! she is dying of want," cried one compassionate voice. "She is expiring from mere starvation," exclaimed a second. "Heavens! to think that while so many are revelling in luxury, a poor fellow-creature should die like a dog!"

However, by degrees poor Adèle recovered the use of her scattered senses, and her first attempt was to break a piece of bread which a water-carrier had slipped into her hand; but when conveyed to her mouth, her parched palate refused to lend its aid, and after vainly endeavouring to masticate the aliment so necessary to recruit her failing strength, her head dropped again upon her breast, a cold perspiration stood on her brow, and exhaustion appeared to have claimed its victim.

"Come, friends," let us make a collection for the unfortunate girl, said an old woman, who, forgetting in the contemplation of another's misery the weight of the huge basket beneath which she was bending, handed round to each individual a sort of fur cap, in which, by way of example, she first placed a forty-sous piece, and varying the mode of her address according as the appearance of those she addressed seemed to require it, she appealed to the benevolence of all. "Pray, Sir, pity the young creature, and put in something, as little as you please, but pray don't throw away this oppor-

tunity of helping a fellow-creature. Come, my good lad, see if there is a trifle still left in the corner of your waistcoat pocket. Oh! my noble soldier, throw in a franc just for luck—you will be never the poorer for helping a poor girl.

"That's right, my worthy old gentleman, let your purse-strings crack; it will be all the same fifty years hence, and you will be neither the richer nor the poorer for it: now then, my good man, throw in a few of those louis which have been burning a hole in your pocket so long.—Pray remember the cap," continued she shaking it in the face of an old lady who seemed anxious to escape her eye. "I beg pardon, but I fancy my lady has not been able to put in on account of the crowd. Stand back all of you, and let this kind lady give her assistance.—Many thanks, my kind madam," added she, when her oratory was crowned with success, "may God bless you—'tis a charity well placed."

The indefatigable basket-woman completed her round without having experienced a refusal from one of those to whom she had applied; all had gladly seized the opportunity of performing a kind action, purchased, as it was by several, at the price of many a privation.

"There," cried a clear-starcher, throwing in a half franc, previously destined to procure for her the treat of a luxurious supper, "there it goes, and I shall fast to night; but I would rather go without a day's food than see yonder poor creature in the state she is."

When the lower order of people perform a praise-worthy action, they are not ashamed to give public vent to their feelings, and to express aloud the sacrifice they have imposed upon themselves; and this from no spirit of ostentation, which would lead them to extol their own act; far from it, no after-regrets disturb their enjoyment of having thus aided a fellow-creature. What virtue and self-denial may be found in such exclamations as the following: "Well, it will be all the same six hours hence, and I shall just have to deny myself the pleasure of going to the barrière, as I had

promised." "I had intended to have put into the lottery; well, I must just wait till next time." "Ah to be sure, we ought to help one another."

"Pooh! pooh, wife, I know what I'm giving. I must go without my pint a day for a little while, that won't hurt me; here, mother with the cup, come this way; only to think of what poor destitute souls are exposed to!"

"I shall make up what I now give by some fortunate bargain, and if I do not even take handsel, I can't help it; bad luck to day, better to-morrow. Good bye to my smart new handkerchief, I must wait a little longer before I buy it, that's all." "True, my pretty one, so you but feed the hungry and pity those who need it, heaven will reward you, never fear."

"Françoise, do you observe I have actually parted with what I have been saving up to redeem my ear-rings."

"Oh, I see! well, I have done the same thing; and now my bracelets must stay where they are till good luck comes again."

"Pray, good people, do not push so dreadfully;—if you cannot help the poor creature, you had better go your ways, and leave room for those who will."

The persevering basket-woman continued her rounds, renewing her entreaties to each fresh comer whom curiosity instigated to approach the assembly. Undaunted by silence, or even direct refusal, she still kept up her tone of supplication.

"See," cried she, "here come some smart ladies; let's see what they will do for us." She hurried towards them, but the females she alluded to, who had just quitted the house before which the whole scene had taken place, just turned their heads, and then redoubled their speed to escape her importunities.

"Holloa there, you people!" exclaimed a fat overfed footman, with powdered head and gaudy livery—"Holloa, I say," continued he, advancing carelessly, leaning upon a broom: "what are you all about, blocking up the door-way in this manner?"

"What does the man say?" asked one.

"Why, I say that if you do not take yourselves off pretty quickly, I will make you; that is all."

"And pray, my worthy sir, does not the street belong to us as well as to you?"

"God bless you, my friend," replied one amongst the crowd, "the fool only echoes the whim or selfish command of his mistress."

"Hold your pert tongue!" vociferated the enraged lacquey, "or I will let you know who I am and who my mistress is too, in a way you will not like: however, I'll soon turn that impostor off the bench where she is lying, playing off her tricks:"—so saying, he sought to break through the crowd, but in vain; he was driven back with a thousand hisses, cries, groans, and execrations.

"Well," cried he, foaming with rage, "we'll soon see who's master, however; you shall just have a benefit from my slop-pail."

"Ha, ha, ha! you rinsing of the waste-butt; oh, oh, oh!"

"You won't stir? Well, then, here goes: remember, he laughs best who laughs the last."

He stepped a few paces backwards, and pushed the door gently. "Molly," said he, "bring me a pail of water here, and see me christen all these rascals."

"Oh, oh, that is what you are after, you blackguard, is it? We hear you. Come here and see how clean we will wash your sneaking face!—Now I have you, you unfeeling brute!—hurra! hurra!—Roll the fellow in the kennel!"

"Let me go, let me go, or I'll"——

"Ah! so you think to bully a bit, do you? Take care what you say, or we will serve you out.—Bravo! bravo!—go it, go it!—give it him well!—serve him out!"

"Fair play! fair play!" cried the frightened domestic. "Really, gentlemen, this is unjust:—I am not to blame—I but fulfil my orders—stay where you are all night—'tis all one to me, but the servant must yield to

the master, and when master ordered me to drive you away, how could I help it?"

"Who is your master? he seems to have very little pity for the unfortunate."

"Faith, if all those whose occupation and conditions renders them familiar with the poor, were not of the same way of thinking, their dwellings would be as much beset as the doors of a mendicity society."

Whilst the servant was speaking, he continued, like a prudent general, to keep up a skilful retreat; and whilst he amused his enemies by a feigned capitulation, he reached, by one quick step, the street door; by a second movement, as abrupt and unexpected, he managed to shake off his enemies, and make good his exit into the house, leaving one of his sleeves behind him as a trophy of victory, at the sight of which a general burst of riotous exhilaration was heard.

"Let the hang-dog hide his rascally face!" cried they. "Well done, sneak; ask friend Molly to hide you in her slop-pail you wished to borrow a few minutes ago."

However, these victorial rejoicings were soon interrupted by the sight of two individuals, whose scantily cut great-coats, black cravats, long canes, and vulgar appearance augured ill for the triumphant party. From the velocity with which they moved along, it might have been conjectured that they were hastening to lend their aid to extinguish a fire.

"This way, gentlemen, this way." Such at least was the meaning to be gathered from the gesture of a tall figure clad in a thick-wadded wrapping coat, and who seemed to be the leader of the party. This tall figure proceeded onwards to about forty paces from the group; and after having bestowed on them a gracious inclination of the head, and a last sign with his finger, at the turning of a street, he disappeared,—or, rather more conformably to decorum, the silent gentleman ensconced himself from whence he could plainly observe all that was passing.

"Here come the exempts!"

"Hallo! out of the way, clear the way!" and elbowing, driving, pushing, flourishing their canes, and displaying that staff of office, the sight of which silences all tongues, and paralyzes every arm, they proceeded straight up to Adèle; and, taking her brutally by the elbow—"Get up, my girl," cried they, "and march before us."

"Shame! shame!" exclaimed the honest fruit-woman, whose praiseworthy activity in behalf of the sufferer had procured so liberal a contribution, "to ill use thus a poor soul: 'tis disgraceful to you as men. What harm has this unfortunate girl done you or any one else?"

"Go about your business: nobody wishes to trouble you: go home with you."

"Don't you see that the poor creature is almost at her last breath?"

"Will you be advised? Do you wish to place your neck between the prison bars?"

"Not I, indeed."

"Well, then, be off with you."

"Alas!" exclaimed Adèle faintly, "for pity's sake, gentlemen, let me have time to recover my breath."

"Never mind that: you'll have plenty of breathing time in the guard-house."

"Oh! I conjure you take pity upon my weakness."

"Come, come, we are up to these tricks: they won't do for us, my pretty one; so none of your gammon nor wry faces. She's a deep hand at it, I see; and as for her dying of hunger, she is as far from it as that good gentleman."—(Pointing to a little fat stumpy pastry-cook who was amongst the spectators.)

"For the love of God, have mercy upon me!"

"Will you never have done with your rigmaroles? Come, march, I tell you; and you shall tell your tale at the guard-house. What! do you suppose we have

nothing to do but to listen to your whinings? Troop I say."

The wretched girl endeavoured to stand; but a fresh giddiness seized her, and she fell at their feet.

With a volley of oaths and threats, one of the exempts seized her as though she had been a wild beast. "I'll be hanged," said he, "if you shall not come, or you shall give a good reason why. Do you hear me, you baggage? March, I say." And again bestowing on her a violent snatch, he tore her apron from her waist, and the money which had been so kindly collected for her fell to the ground and rolled in all directions. Some children, who perceived the accident, brought back some few pieces; but before half of the number dropped could be recovered, a hackney-coach passed by, and was immediately ordered to stop. The exempts dragged the body of the insensible Adèle towards it, who looked, indeed, like a corpse whom assassins were hurrying to the grave, in order to conceal their crime, and threw her roughly on one of the seats.

"What are you all staring at so curiously," cried they to the spectators of this savage scene; "did you never see a woman drunk before?"

Scandalous! infamous! disgusting! murmured the bystanders, who were not to be duped by this shallow artifice. However, the coach door was shut; the coachman mounted his box. "To the depôt, to the prefecture, if you understand that better;" and so saying, the vehicle rolled on.

CHAPTER LVI.

The inside of a coach—Two wretches—*La Morgue* and the corps-de-garde—False humanity—The compassionate soldiers—The invincible Eighteenth—The good captain—Who gives what he has, gives what he can—The return home—A straw bed—A delirium—The candle end—Gratitude.

ADELE had lost all consciousness. The two policemen, who had placed her between them, rubbed her hard, and chafed her hands in the hope of reviving her: the coachman, who was listening, heard them say, in words which denoted their embarrassment,—

"Is she acting a farce, or is she not?"

"Let us see, but don't play the fool."

"Hold your jaw."

"Well, I think that it is no joke."

"Pinch her."

"Well, it's no use to pinch her, she does not move nor stir."

"What! does not her eyelid even twinkle?"

"On my word, I think she is done for.—(*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha! What a go! what a farce!"

"What! do you think she would play us such a trick?"

"'Pon my soul, there's nothing to laugh at; we're in a nice concern with this lump of carrion!"

"Stuff, stuff! There is no difficulty in the thing: let's leave her at La Morgue*,—that will be the shortest and only way.—(*He calls*)—Coachee!"

"No, no; let's go to the nearest guard-house."

"Very right: we can say we picked her up in the streets through humanity. They may then do what they like with her, it will be no business of ours."

* La Morgue is a species of charnel-house in Paris, where all corpses found and unknown are deposited until owned by relatives or friends.—TRANSL.

"I know all that as well as you can tell me; but who will pay the fare?"

"Oh, the devil! never thought of that."

"Of course I shall not."

"Nor I."

"Well then, old boy, she must: I saw a forty-sous piece."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, for I have it in my hand."

"All right. Well, then, (*addressing the coachman*) drive to the next guard-house."

They arrived there; and having exchanged a few words with the officer on duty, the policemen took their leave. Whilst the officer was full of admiration at their generous behaviour, Adèle, whom they had lifted from the coach, was lying on a bench near the stove.

A Sergeant. "Captain, what are we to do with this woman?"

Officer. "We have only to inform the commissary; for there is no likelihood of her coming to herself."

Soldier. "She is, perhaps, in a lethargy."

Second Sol. "Good, M. Delormes, with your lethargy, you don't seem to see the bump she's got on head."

Captain. "Is she wounded? We ought to have secured those men. I thought they had a hanging look about them."

First Sol. "My stars, what a deep cut! Sergeant, only look, see the blood begins to spout out again."

Ser. "I'faith it is very red."

Off. "Then she still lives, the warmth has restored the circulation: who is smoking here? Corporal, smoke a little under her nose."

Corporal. "That will only do her more harm than good."

Capt. "Don't be afraid."

COR. (*Who approached the bench and sent out a long puff of smoke.*) "It seems to do famously."

CAPT. "That's well, that's well; do so again."

The return to life was announced by a slight contraction of the countenance, and by a convulsive movement of the limbs. Adèle breathed again, coughed, and by an effort raised herself on the seat, where she had been recumbent.

The CAPT. (*in an under-tone to the sergeant,*) "She looks like a spectre."

SER. "Exactly like a body dug up from the grave."

A CONSCRIPT. "If I were not here I should be frightened, and think I saw a ghost."

Adèle looked about her, and after some moments, with those accents expressive of a soul full of sweetness, said, "I was so well." Her horizon cleared, darkness was dissipated. "Where am I? (*with emotion*) the guard! in prison! good God, in prison!"

OFF. "Cheer up, my good woman, you are with those who will not harm you."

ADELE. "Ah, Sir! Holy Virgin! what have I done?"

SER. "As long as you are with us, there is no fear of any person harming you; are we not the *invincible eighteenth?*" (*He handed his canteen to her.*) "Drink, that will do you good—it's good; at least it cost six sous the half pint, so it ought to be."

AD. "Ah, good sir, M. Sergeant, I thank you, excuse ——"

SER. "I will not, you shall drink, or tell me why not. Come, come, it will revive you."

The persuasions of the sergeant were so powerful and pressing, that Adèle dared no longer refuse, and soon recovered sufficient strength to be able to answer the questions which the officer addressed to her. She did not complain, she related the truth; and in her mouth, truth was so eloquent, that the *vieilles moustaches* (hardened veterans), enraged at first with the brutality of the police men, were surprised afterwards to find a tear starting to their eyes.

CAPT. "Well, sergeant, what's the matter with you? I thought you as tough as a hog's hide."

SER. "I am; but injustice is abhorrent to me; and then, captain, to own the truth, I could not prevent its coming."

COR. "I am not mighty soft and sensitive, but it is too much for me, I cannot bear to see a woman weep. It gives me so much uneasiness, that for nothing I would give her all my '*chink*,' (*taking from his pocket an old glove which had served him for a purse.*) I have twenty-two sous and a half, and I am d—d if I don't give them all to her. Why make any ado about it? Why shouldn't I? with the allowance bread to-day—Well, who collects the cash? Let him have all, the small and large pieces, from a liard to six francs."

SER. "I should like to make it forty, but the thing's impossible; thirty-five, and the bag is empty: if I were skinned alive, they could not get another dump out of me."

A SOL. "Here are my twenty-five centimes and my ration. Comrades, come, shell out, you who have got any. There are some chaps under the bed. (*He pulled one out by the leg.*) It's Lorrain—I would have bet a wager of that."

ALL. "Ah! we may well say '*villain Lorrain, traitor to God and his neighbour.*'"

LORRAIN. "I am asleep."

SOL. "Five sous."

LOR. "Leave me alone."

SOL. "Tip, and sleep afterward."

LOR. "I a'nt got no blunt."

SER. "You can't comb the devil if he has no hair."

CAPT. (*Taking ten francs from his purse.*) "Leave him alone, I will pay for him and the sentinels."

AD. "Captain, you are too good."

CAPT. "Your situation demands care: if you like I will have you conveyed to the Hotel Dieu?"

COR. "There is an hospital nearer; La Pitié is not two steps distance."

SER. "You can't get in at night there, or anywhere else."

CAPT. "Yet accidents may happen at night as well as in the day; and for an hospital to fulfil all the purposes of its establishment, it should be open at all hours."

SER. "I beg your pardon, captain, but you are in error."

CAPT. "If that be the case, she must be conducted to her home. (*To Adele*) You have a home?"

AD. "I had one to-day; I was there with some friends, who are, perhaps, at this moment even worse than myself."

CAPT. "Do you feel capable of walking?"

AD. (*getting up and staggering*). "Oh, yes; I am not so weak as I was."

CAPT. "Well, then, some person shall accompany you. Numbers seven and eight, leave your cartridge-boxes, take the lantern, and go with this female; lead her gently, stop as often as it may be necessary, and mind that she does not lose her money."

SER. "Mind, my good woman; remember ten francs the captain gave you; ten, eleven, twelve, fourteen, seventeen; seven francs eleven sous that you had in your pockets: in all, twenty-four francs fifty-five centimes. Now look, I tie them up in the corner of your apron: twenty-four francs eleven sous tied up in that knot. Can you now say that soldiers are the scum of the earth, and that there are no good fellows in the Invincibles?"

Adèle would have uttered every testimony that gratitude could suggest: "You are kind, very kind."

"Thank them another time," said the captain; "go now and sleep, you must need repose."

"I think so," exclaimed number seven, "after a thump like that she has received. Cheer up, my little

woman; lean on us. Don't be afraid; I am stout and strong, and so is my comrade."

"Yes, yes; lean as heavy as you like."

It was nearly two o'clock in the morning when Adèle reached her abode. They knocked at the door, which Frederic opened. On penetrating the retreat which Adèle pointed out as her domicile, the two soldiers were actually frightened: not the smallest portion of furniture; the four walls; some trusses of straw, and on them were lying two women, without sheets or coverlids, without the least covering of any kind to shield them.

"Where shall we lay her down?" said one of the soldiers.

"Give me that! give me that!" said Frederic, snatching from their hands a loaf, which he bit with eagerness.

"By Mars! he is hungry. Come, ladies, rise; we bring you some provisions. Come, Parisian, divide this ration; have you a knife?"

THE PARISIAN. "What do we want with that?"

After having broken the bread, he approached one of the women, and taking her by the hand, said—

"Well, are you dead?"

She turned on one side: "Ah, is it you, *mon doux Jésus?*" Then, seeing the morsel of bread, she seized and devoured it.

Susanne, whom Adèle approached, raised herself up without answering her, and after having looked at the light with a smile which made one shudder, she extends her arm—"How beautiful the angels are! Do you see, my sister? they have not deceived me; it is Adèle! She is with them! I should like to devour a wing! I knew that they would ask me to the wedding! She is all in white! She had a hat on! No, sir, I don't dance after supper. The goose! the goose!—yes, yes, the goose!—ah, certainly! I like it very much? Be so kind as to pass those pigeons to me!"

A SOL. "She is at supper; but it is evident to me that her cupboard's empty."

ADELE. "Take this, my dearest girl; it is bread."

SUSANNE. "Bread! for shame! Do you eat bread? These brains are excellent. The dessert! the dessert is magnificent! I shall put some of that in my bag!"

AD. "She is delirious."

SUS. "Oysters! oh, I could eat twenty dozen! Make haste! Come, come, open them quickly! Quicker, quicker! you are tiresomely slow."

AD. "Excuse her; her mind wanders."

THE PARISIAN.) "It does, indeed; her little wits are wool-gathering."

AD. "Susanne, dear Susanne, hear me; it is I. Don't you know me? I am Adèle!

SUS. "Ah, your husband is very gentlemanly."

AD. "Do not wander so wildly; here is bread, take it and eat it."

SUS. "It is for me, is it not?"

AD. "Yes, yes, it is for you."

SUS. (*She took the bread, examined it, tasted it.*) "Pie, excellent pie, one of Lesage's make; the crust is admirable, delicious." (*She ate voraciously.*)

ONE OF THE SOL. (*to his comrade*). "I wish I was a rich man."

THE PAR. "And so do I, were it only that I might be kind to people like these! It breaks my heart; here, come away; have you a lamp or candle that I can light for you?"

FREDERIC. "Candle? lamp? when we have not a morsel of bread in the house."

THE PAR. "Suppose we leave them an end of candle?"

THE OTHER SOL. "Yes, do; the corporal will say nothing about it."

THE PAR. "Well, then, leave the candle end. Adieu, my friends, I trust you will be more fortunate, and see better days."

AD. "Ah, I shall never forget what you have done for me."

THE PAR. "Adieu, adieu, good luck to you until I see you again."

THE OTHER SOL. "Ah, take care of yourselves, miserable, unhappy creatures."

THE PAR. "Chut, chut, wait till we get outside."

For Adèle and her companions this was a fortunate day that was about to beam on them. The sun rose on twenty-four francs fifty-five centimes that belonged to them. What blessings did they call down on the heads of the brave fellows of the invincible Eighteenth. Adèle was hurt, crushed, by the accident of the preceding evening, but yet was so happy, because she had brought plenty to the house, that scarcely had day dawned when she began to sing. As for Susanne, her brain was no longer occupied with deceitful hallucinations. Sleep had restored her to reason, and the phantom of a splendid banquet no longer irritated her appetite, satisfied by a less seducing reality, although infinitely more solid and satisfactory.

"I remember nothing of it," said she. "What! did the soldiers do all this? For a trifle, now, I would go and kiss the captain."

AD. "And the sergeant, and the corporal, in fact, all of them behaved like deities."

FRED. "Then they may rely on it, that, go wherever I may, and meet their regiment, it will be that I have not a farthing in my pocket if I do not treat them to drink. Don't you think, Henriette, that they richly deserve a kind return for their feeling conduct."

HENRIETTE. "Yes, my dear fellow, we ought to vow a candle for their safety; but for them this day had been our finale."

CHAPTER LVII.

The kettle empty—The audience and reading *la Quotidienne*—Break your arms and legs!—Have you a curate?—Justice is there—The tall figure again—The second breakfast.

A SUM of twenty-four francs fifty-five centimes is not an inexhaustible fund, and the party who knew it well did all their endeavours to procure work, but there was no possibility of getting any. The eleventh day, in the morning, the kettle was again empty.

"Now," said Frederic, "we may hang our teeth up on a hook. What do you think of it, Adèle?"

"I do not know. I have a presentiment and wish to satisfy myself on one particular point; if I do not succeed I shall have the less to reproach myself with."

"You will not succeed. When any one is in ill luck, all exertion is useless, he may drown himself in his own spittle."

"Be that as it may, I shall have a clear conscience."

Adèle went out and hastened to the house of the commissary of *bienfaisance*. At the sight of the fatal bench on which she had lain in so wretched a situation, she trembled, hesitated, and almost retreated. It was not twelve of the clock, they could not refuse to introduce her. She summoned up her courage and stepped over the threshold.

"Oh! where are you going?" said the surly porter.

"To monsieur."

"It is not the hour,—you must come again at eleven o'clock."

Adèle did not fail to appear when the clock struck the hour.

"You may go up stairs."

She went up, and after awaiting the delays and submitting to the impertinent curiosity of the antechamber she obtained the audience she solicited.

The commissary received her. He was seated in a lounging attitude in an arm-chair, with his eyes fixed on the 'Quotidienne*,' an article in which made him smile.

"What do you want?" he inquired.

Adèle stated her situation and that of her friends The picture she drew was distressing, but he did not condescend to suspend the perusal of his newspaper, and she had ceased speaking at least twenty minutes, when, throwing the journal down on a small side-table, he broke silence with this singular *aside* speech.

"Well, all things duly considered, I shall make up my mind to go to the Variétés† this evening. Oh! what you are there, woman? You say that——"

"Sir, I come to implore——"

"Yes, I see all about it. Have you any family?"

"No, sir."

"You are not sixty, I can see. Have you any infirmities?"

"No, sir."

"You are young and well; you have strong arms; what more would you have? Do you think 'the bureau de charité' will support you in idleness?"

"I am a workwoman, and ask only the means of procuring employ."

"Can we give you work?"

"Ah! sir, if I could procure any through your means; I am in the lowest depths of distress."

"If we succoured all those who come here like you, the bureau could not suffice for the multitudinous claims we have. Have you any recommendations? Do you know any body?"

"No, sir."

"Have your application backed, and then we shall see."

"But, sir, by whom shall I get it backed?"

* A newspaper so called.—TRANS.

† A theatre in Paris.—TRANS.

"Have you not a curate in your parish? It is simple enough: bring me a letter from him."

"That will take some time to do, and I am without bread."

"So much the worse for you. I cannot act otherwise."

"In the mean time what will become of me? I must turn thief, and rob some one."

"As you like; but justice is at hand. Well, you have nothing more to say to me;—good day, good day."

He then arose, and rang for his servant.

"What, do you still remain there? Did you not hear me?"

"Pardon me," stammered out Adèle, who, under the long folds of a dressing gown in which he was enveloped, thought she recognised the tall figure whose orders the policemen had obeyed. At this moment a servant entered.

"What do you please to want, sir?"

"Tell the cook to bring up my second breakfast, and make haste, for I am dying with hunger. Order the horses to be put in the carriage at three o'clock."

"Will you go to the Exchange, sir?"

"Yes; go, make haste."

Adèle was mute and motionless.

"If you look at me till this time to-morrow what benefit would it be to you? Will you compel me to turn you out by the shoulders? I tell you once more, see the clergyman of your parish."

Adèle could not make any objection; and half indignant, half confounded, she said to the commissary, taking her leave,—"I thank you, and shall follow your advice."

CHAPTER LVIII.

A priest should be humane—The parsonage-house—The preparations for a gala—The devotees—Curiosity—The Abbé Tatillon, or the major-domo—*Te Deum laudamus*—Regrets *à la comète*—An indiscretion—Meddle with your own affairs.

Adele went towards the residence of the clergyman: "If I am repulsed here," she thought,—"well, I will not be repulsed: if fate rages so desperately against me, it shall not be said that my faults are of my own seeking. I will try all means of attaining success. But how to accost the clergyman? I do not go to church; he has never seen me, and perhaps will reprimand me; but he will not eat me up alive; he is a priest, priests ought to be humane, charitable; their religion tells them to be kind to every body. Then what do I ask? a letter; it costs but very little to write a letter; I would rather die than supplicate that cruel wretch the commissary again. To die! it is very cruel at my age. Once I felt the necessity of it, but never shall again. I will tell the clergyman all my misfortunes, those of my friends, he shall know all, from *Pater* to *Amen*, (from beginning to end;) and if he have the bowels of charity, if he be a Christian, he cannot help feeling compassion for our sufferings, and giving us the succour we so greatly need."

Whilst cogitating all this over in her mind, Adèle arrived at the clergyman's residence. The porter, of whom she inquired if the pastor could be seen, pointed out to her a pavilion at the bottom of the court yard. "Enter that," said he, "and you will find M. l'Abbé there."

Adèle followed his directions, and after having knocked for some time, pushed the door, and saw before her a large room, where, on a sideboard shining with gold and silver, were spread out all the delicacies and dainties of terrestrial paradise. Women were bustling

about in all directions. "That will do better this way, this will do better that way. The appearance of the whole is charming, delightful! this cream is delicious! What do you think of my dish of sweetmeats?"

All the women were so busied, that she entered without being perceived.

"Now, put those plates a little in order; you spoil the look of the whole service. Mind, now; you very nearly broke my dish."

Then came the question, "What do you want here?" addressed to Adèle by a sister of *Visitation*.

"What does that woman want?" was asked in the same breath by a nun of *Sacré Cœur*.

"Does Madame want anything?" inquired a Canoness, who seemed to preside over these preparations. "Demoiselle Marie, just see what the person wants."

Demoiselle Marie approached Adèle, "What is your wish, Madame?"

"I wish to have the honour of speaking to M. the vicar."

"If you have anything very particular to say to him, you can communicate it to me; it is just the same as speaking to himself; I will tell him faithfully all you have to say; is it a public or private matter that you wish to see him upon?"

"I wish to speak with him in private."

"In private, my dear! oh, we don't speak to the vicar in that way."

"Ask him in writing to give you an audience, and if he thinks proper he will reply to you, and fix a time when he can conveniently see you."

"He will reply to me to-morrow, perhaps, and then it will be too late."

"If you are so much in haste, it seems to me that you might just as well state to me what brought you hither."

"I can only tell it to the vicar."

"Ah, that is different, I have no wish to know it: if I have asked you any questions, it was for your own

sake and interest; you have your secrets, Madame, and pray keep them, keep them by all means, I am too good to occupy myself with you in this way."

"Since Demoiselle Marie is the superintendant of this gala," said a sister aide-de-camp, who, with fine herbs and anchovies, amuses herself in drawing on the plate the instruments of the passion, "why make with her a mystery of your proceedings?"

"We all have our reasons, sister."

"Heaven protect us from seeking to penetrate yours, my dear child, it is not curiosity that induces us; we curious indeed, oh! Jesus, no, that is not our failing: but I like better that people should clearly and properly explain themselves."

"But pray cease to solicit the lady," cried the Canoness ironically, "she is not compelled to tell you every thing."

"Oh, I know what it is," replied the Demoiselle Marie, "she is some mumper: they literally swarm here, nothing but beggars to be seen; we might say that, we have nothing to do but to stoop and pick them up,—alms, alms, they are not so very abundant, we have never been more pestered, and we have our own poor, and—"

"Do not put yourself so much out of the way to no purpose; you do not know what I want, and it was not to you that I addressed myself."

"Do you mark the insolent creature?"

"Proud heart and humble fortune," observed the Canoness, "they are all alike."

"People ought to be humble when they are not rich," remarked the Sister of Visitation.

"Nobody is more charitable than I am," said the Sister of Sacré Cœur; "but I like to see people humble. Ah! humility is a fine virtue. If this lady had told us what she wanted, we might perhaps have had pleasure in lending her our assistance."

At this moment, the staff-major of this troop of gouvernantes, servants, nuns, canonesses, and devotees of all ages and all colours, surrounded the mumper.

"*Tell us; intrust to us; confide in us,*" they cried; and a thousand other interpellations, more or less imperative, were simultaneously uttered.

"Whilst you surround me like a parcel of bailiffs," cried Adèle, who did not know amidst the multitude whom to answer, "I have nothing to tell you."

Whilst she was thus enduring the pitiless pelting of the storm of inquiries, the atmosphere was suddenly filled with the most delicious perfumes. Oh what agreeable odour! it is exhaled from a delicate cambric handkerchief used by a young abbé, fresh and gay, who came with a candlestick in his hand, wiping his forehead.

"Pancrace, mind where you put your feet," said this major-domo to a fat fellow whose arms and loins were both wearied with the weight of forty bottles miraculously packed in a hamper.

"Take care," added the abbé, "there is a step. There, mind. Ah! now our chambertin is all right; but not without trouble, was it brother? *Te Deum laudamus.*"

"Monsieur l'Abbé, where did you take it from?" asked Demoiselle Marie, "from the bottom of the cellar?"

"Yes; the comet cellar."

"That's perfectly right."

"Do you know that it diminishes from being drunk? Ah! if it pleased the Lord to send us another star."

He drew himself up suddenly, as if surprised at the sight of a strange face; and, looking at Adèle, said—

"I do not know this lady?"

"She wants the vicar."

"The vicar. Oh! he has other fish to fry.—(*To Adèle.*)—You could not, madam, have selected your time more unpropitiously. The vicar will not be at liberty all day. We have coming to dinner, MM. de la Fabrique and the Fathers of the Mission; and you know that, at festival times, (with an amiable air,) we know when they begin, but cannot tell when they will

terminate. Besides, what do you want with the vicar? Are you one of his sheep?"

"I do not know, sir."

"And who knows, if you do not? Diantre, diantre! Yes, yes, (he stammered.) Ah! I see, I see: it is only with him that you have business; so I should not have the leisure to hear you. I have plenty of work before me. I advise you not to go out again where you entered: the vicar will be much fatigued, and glad to throw himself on his bed for a moment: then he will sit down to table——. No: upon consideration, write to him."

"That is what we have already advised madame to do," observed Mademoiselle Marie.

"Well, then," replied the abbé, "there is another way——"

"Pray, M. l' Abbé," cried the Gouvernante, "meddle with your own concerns. Your way! do you think I could not have told her as well you, if I had thought proper to do so? But you know how displeased the vicar is, when any one goes to him in the vestry."

"The vestry!" murmured Adèle, in a low voice; to whom the word was as a new light: and instantly making a courtesy, which was not returned, she went out and ran towards the church.

CHAPTER LIX.

The Sacristan—Demoiselle Marie, or the pass-word.—The two Vicars, or the parallel—The old and the new—Well-ordered charity—The representation—Registers of the civil state—Picture of deep misery—No one dies of hunger—Malediction—A general confession—The tall figure again—Impertinent allusion—Baptism and burial—The charitable actor.

She soon reached the cloisters of the sanctuary, and was looking about for the vestry.

"Behind the choir to the left, you will see the inscription in gold letters," said one of the givers of holy water.

Adèle read the inscription. "It is here, then," she said, as she entered.

"Well, what do you want? where are you going so fast?" cried a man in a large black gown, whom the skull-cap on his head denoted to be one of the servitors of the temple: "is it a baptism, a marriage, a burial, masses, the holy viaticum? This is the sacrament bell."

"M. the Vicar."

"From whom?"

"The Demoiselle Marie."

"The Demoiselle Marie. Then welcome, my dear madame. You will see the vicar; but at this moment he is still *in pontificalibus*, and you must wait until he be unrobed. Pray be seated there on the seat near the window: do you see, you had better watch for his leaving the robing-room, and then you can say what you wish. Ah! the vicar is a most worthy man."

"You instil life into me."

"Generous and compassionate, how happy are those who live around him! The parish owes him much. In the first place, he has had the tabernacle and choir-window regilt. Twenty thousand francs have been expended

for that; then we are more liberally paid than by his predecessor, God have mercy on his soul. He always used to have a crowd of paupers at his heels, or idlers, worthless creatures; and for their sakes he cut down our remuneration. He would have brought us to a straw apiece; but then, to be sure, he denied himself every thing, and one should not be one's own executioner: the humblest stonemason lived better than he did. If he had dared, I think that, for their pleasure, he would willingly have gone quite naked, or nearly so; well-ordered charity begins with self, and that nearest to us. Besides, the head of the parish should represent it, but he looks like a miser; a threadbare coat, an old hat, and a surplice full of darns. One might have put a *liard* in his hand, and would not have given one for his whole suit. He was strict with us, as if the first poor were not in the church; in fact, he was a Jansenist; there was some talk of elevating him to a bishopric: I should pity the diocese he might have presided over.

"An inflammation of the chest, caught going out one night in the winter, to carry the extreme unction to a poor sick person, sent him *ad Patres* (to his fathers.) Well, he has not been regretted; now, all goes on well, and cannot fail to go on better and better. When we have a tabernacle of gold, and I do not despair of it, as we have already a sun, all the world will know it,—I as well as others. It is only that horrible Chamber that disturbs us, or else I promise you we should soon be above our present situation."

"What! have you too much revenue?"

"No, no; it is not that. I understand—by the help of God and the congregation, we shall contrive to get rid of that. But you are a woman, and these matters are above your understanding. Since you came from the parsonage, you must know that they are preparing a splendid feast. These gentlemen have met, and not for nothing, I am sure: they are going to deliberate, to come to a decision. There is something to be done and

managed, I know—May the Holy Spirit lend them his lights; they do not want them, I know, but they will do no harm.

"Ah! whilst we are talking, here is the Vicar; if I had not watched, he would have passed. Make haste, make haste; that is he with the rosy face and large stomach. How plump! I have not misrepresented him, at all events. So he is going to the entry office; he is going to put his seal to the register of the civil state; that is another robbery they are committing on us. Do not disturb him, but as soon as he is done there will be no harm in accosting him. You will see how affable he is when any one pleases him."

"Oh, that I may please him!" sighed Adèle, quitting the sacristan; and, that she might be in readiness to accost the Vicar when he laid aside his pen, she stationed herself behind the chair in which he was seated. After having looked over a few pages, the pastor turned round, and casting on Adèle one of those looks in which the feeling of self-importance was scarcely concealed beneath an assumed benevolence:

"You have something to say to me?" he asked, in that mild tone which was acquired in the days of his apprenticeship.

"Yes, reverend sir."

"What is it about?"

"You see before you a wretched female, who knows not where to lay her head; but what most distresses me is, that I am not alone in my misery—there are four of us. Yes, sir, four, three females and a man—all unfortunate together, with not a morsel of food to place between our lips, not the smallest particle of furniture or clothing to sell and purchase a meal's victuals. Could you but enter the hole in which we live, you would shudder. But even now you can judge for yourself, you have evidence before your eyes; it freezes enough to pierce a stone, and, cold as it is, I have only this cotton garment, and that tattered and torn, and you see I have only my flesh and blood to walk on."

"Yes, unfortunately, I see it; but how can I help it? The apostles walked barefoot."

"In the name of God, sir, do not abandon me; if you refuse us aid we must perish."

"Here is another; they think we roll in riches; by the way they open their batteries, every one would suppose we are made of money. We are besieged, overwhelmed, stunned; we ought to have the income of Lafitte, and that would not suffice. There is the *Comité de bienfaisance*, why don't you apply there?"

"Ah, sir, the *comité*, when I am perishing of hunger."

"That's all fudge, nobody dies of hunger in Paris!"

"Just heaven! there is then a condition more wretched than misery! a misery of which I had not thought."

"I do not doubt what you tell me of your situation, but no one will believe impossibilities; besides, what are your claims to the bounties of the faithful? I am the dispenser of them, it is true, but I must render an account of the alms I bestow. Who sent you to me? do you take the sacraments—who is your director?"

Adèle hid her face, and was silent.

"You are silent, you do not speak; I see how it is, you are an impious creature, an atheist, a heretic, an unbeliever!"

She attempted to speak, but the heaving sobs of her bosom prevented her.

"What answer can you make, damned soul? It is not for you that the manna will fall from heaven."

Adèle prostrated herself at his feet, and embraced his knees, saying,

"Sir, father, I am a great sinner—I deserve all your reproaches—I have forgotten all religious duties—yes, I am culpable."

"Rise, you are devoted to Satan—I say so."

"Oh, forgive me, I will do all that you order; I will submit to any penance you may please to inflict."

"It is time; you ask to be reconciled with the Lord,

because you have need of him. The Lord casts you off because you are accursed."

"I will pray and appease him."

"Yes, pray to him, offer up to him your afflictions, expiate by perpetual repentance the indifference in which you have lived; but as long as you are unworthy I can hope for nothing."

"Oh! misery, misery."

"You are tall, strong, well made, why don't you work?"

"Work! I am avoided, shunned, driven out everywhere. Oh! you are right to say so! we are cursed; the curse clings to us, follows us everywhere. Why cannot I begin my life again! Coquetry should not tempt me again. When we are young, why can we not foresee what results from it! Better would it have been for me to break my neck than to have listened to the sorcery which tempted me from my parental home! She tempted me with finery, the seducer! and I thought she meant me well! she is the cause of all: she has involved me in this abyss; but for her I never should have known the police men—never."

She covered her eyes with her hands and continued:

"My father and mother died of grief, and I their daughter—shall I confess it?—instead of reforming, have put the copestone on my ingratitude and misconduct! Oh! I have been cruelly punished for it, and am still, although I have passed sixteen years of my life at Saint Lazare! Yes, sir, sixteen years!"

"What, have you undergone a sentence of justice! begone from me, infamous creature! you horrorize me!"

"You drive me from you, you treat me like the most degraded of the human race: is it not then true that the Saviour took Mary Magdalene to his pity? is it not true that he pardoned the adulterous woman? Has there been no Vincent de Paule? The almoner of the prison, when he said that the mercy of God is inexhaustible? No, he did not deceive us: he did not put forth a lie from that mouth so pure, and whence

issued only the words of consolation! Great and holy Vincent de Paule, you of whom he so often spoke to us; you who, to convert evil doers, attached yourself to their chain; you, whose virtues he imitated, intercede for me. Are you not still on this earth! You would be touched by my tears, you would not repulse me!"

"Saint Vincent would do as he thought best; I do as I can, and can do nothing. I repeat to you, I can do nothing; it is very sad for you, but you understand me, therefore importune me no further."

Adèle arose.

"Hear me, sir, I conjure you."

"It is useless."

"One word, only one single word."

"This woman is insupportable! Well, what is this word? Do not keep me in suspense; you see I am sent for."

He turned towards the door, and made with his head many inclinations, accompanied with that smile full of amenity which, on a practised physiognomy, can ally itself to a contrary expression; he made also with his hand an amiable and courtier-like wave of recognition and salute.

"One moment, my dear churchwarden, the business is settled, and I follow you."

Adèle was again struck with the appearance of the tall figure, for the churchwarden was also the commissary of *bienfaisance*. Her tongue cleaved to the roof of her mouth. The vicar desired her to speak.

"Is it for to-day?"

"I am without bread!" in the midst of sobs and tears was all she could utter.

"Still the same song! You have told me so already. Now, if you would have me take any interest in you, begin by making your peace with heaven—Endeavour to obtain remission of your sins—make a general confession, and bring me a written testimony of your having performed these acts of Catholicity—then give some

powerful and convincing proofs of your repentance—weep over your errors—detest your crimes—groan, groan and purify yourself—lay aside the blots of your evil deeds—accuse yourself of all the crimes you have been guilty of."

"Pray, sir, do you count as nothing the confession, in some sort public, that she has just made?" interrupted one of the spectators of this scene, who, approaching Adèle, slipped into her hand a piece of money. "O God!" he cried,

Lasciate ogn' esperanza voi ch' entrate!!!

"Is it, can it be at the gate of his temples that we should read this motto of hell?"

The vicar darted a glance (which he would fain have had a thunderbolt) at the speaker, then turning to one of the persons near him, said:—

"Did you hear what he mumbled in Latin? No doubt some impertinent allusion taken from the Holy Scriptures."

"I beg your pardon; it is a verse of Dante's, meaning—*You who enter here, leave all hope behind.*"

"It is an insult: it is most audacious to come to the very holy of holies, to censure our actions. Who is this polite gentleman?"

In reply to this question, the beadle, who had been admitted third man in the colloquy, presented a slip of paper—the vicar read—"*a player.*"

"Ah! that does not astonish me; an actor! a mountebank! a——. We cannot refuse baptism to his child; but as for him, I shall have my revenge, I expect, at his burial *."

Whilst fulminating this excommunication, in an under

* In France they do not allow the 'poor player' to be interred in consecrated ground. The vice of his life clings to the breathless corse, which would of course pollute the crumbling dust of holy men, who expired covered with the grease of extreme unction.—TRANSL.

tone, the vicar took the arm of the churchwarden, they both disappeared, and the same carrriage carried them and their anathemas away.

Adèle, stupified at all she had seen and heard, remained motionless.

"Come, take heart," said the comedian to her, "dry up your tears; there are good priests and good souls; you will find them, and Providence, moreover, is very good. You have to-day wherewith to get a dinner."

"Ah! sir, but for you——"

"Don't mention that—go and get something to eat, that is the first thing; go—(*then aside, and walking away quickly*)—Abominable prejudice! poor woman! I regret almost not having taken her for a god-mother."

The friends of Adèle longed for her return, and she entered, throwing down a twenty-franc piece, "Here it is."

"A yellow-boy!"

"Yes! ah, he was a good man who gave it to me, an actor."

"An actor?"

"I will tell you all about it: in the meanwhile go for something to eat. Oh! my friends, the commissary of bienfaisance, the vicar, the devotees, what a set! what hearts! It is useless talking about them. We must be thrifty, however, and live close, for the vicar is not the man to give us any more when this is gone and spent. We will first go and take a snap at an eating-house, to prevent death from walking off with any of us: a sheep's head and some vegetable soup; that's the bill of fare, do you see? and after that we will return."

This repast, so modest and moderate, was soon terminated; they then went to the market-place, where they bought two sacks of potatoes and some other vegetables; fifteen francs were thus expended; thus, as far as appetite was concerned, they had provision for nearly a month.

CHAPTER LX.

The month too soon passed away—Visit to benefactors—They have gone—The mourning coaches—The attendants on funerals—The apostrophes—The lackeys—The chapel—We owe truth to the dead—The director of the quadrilles—The plain of Virtues—The drum beats—Atrocious jestings—A brawl—The excommunicant—God! it is he—Is it a vision?—The vanities of an impious creature—The funeral-knell—The two folding-doors—The clergy—The corners of the pall—The tall figure appears again—Hatred of the world.

The month glided away but too rapidly; it expired before the termination of the dead season. The party, after having in vain tramped up and down soliciting employ, saw themselves again threatened by famine. It was the end of March.

"Thirty-one, and now a day without bread, distress in the land," such were the first words which the locksmith uttered on awaking.

"Oh, fate, that deprived me of my father!" cried Susanne.

"'Tis but too true, empty cupboard and empty stomachs," sighed her sister.

"Yes," returned Frederic, "we have returned to the point from which we started yesterday month, day for day. If *Mameselle* Adèle could but meet again some one of the invincibles of the eighteenth, who are such good fellows, or only that worthy actor!"

"Oh, I cannot anticipate any such luck as that; I shall rather stumble over some stone, and break my neck."

"But yet it is you, Mam'selle, who have always had the best luck, and extricated us from our embarrassments. I am sure that if you would reflect a little on the best way of going to work, you would not return empty-handed."

"Days follow each other, but bear no similarity, and I have no idea which way or how to betake myself."

"Why throw the handle away after the blade? You have been seasonably inspired, and why may not that again occur?"

"What would you have me do?"

"The officer and the soldiers who saved our lives, the worthy player who was so generous—they are not dead."

"Yes, but where can I go to seek them? The soldiers, perhaps, I might find; but as for the comedian, I do not know his name, and to go in search of him would be seeking for a needle in a bottle of hay."

"You know his parish?"

"I do, my friends, certainly; you are right. I must find them out, there is no other hope or resource for me; I must find them, and they will not allow us to perish."

"Well, I like that."

Adèle was not long in preparing herself; she ran, quite out of breath, to the barracks, and then learnt that the regiment had been ordered away the previous evening. This information fell on her like a thunderbolt, for then her sole remaining hope was in discovering the abode of the comedian, her last benefactor. Sombre, pensive, and agitated by divers presentiments, she calculated the fatal and inevitable consequences of a new disappointment. A noise, of which she did not know the cause, was the first thing that aroused her from her reverie. A long train of mourning coaches were advancing slowly, at the head of which, drawn by four horses, covered with plumes and decorated housings, was the funeral car, completely covered with trophies. Twenty-four carriages followed closely after.

It could be only for some grandee that all these pompous decorations and imposing show could be produced. Adèle remembered that, on these occasions, the vanity of the relatives of the deceased purchased by alms the regrets of the poor, whom the dead never knew when living. "There will be mourners," she said to herself, "I will be of the nmbuer, and they will pay me."

In this persuasion she preceded the car, and soon perceived, on the front of a large house those lugubrious suits of hangings, &c., the profusion of which betoken the opulence of the owner who has just left them. Not far off was a groupe of ill-dressed persons, both men and women, who paraded the street, some beating with their feet, others striking their breasts vehemently with their hands; others again, to warm themselves in another way, were swallowing down, at the nearest public-house, that glass of *consolation*, according to the usual custom under these circumstances made and provided.

Adèle's was a new face to them; she had not yet opened her mouth, yet not one of them was mistaken as to her intentions; she gave them umbrage, and without having in any way conspired against her previously, they all united to drive her away.

"Do not hurry yourself so much," cried one of the mendicants, "we are complete in number."

"Where is this 'ere voman a coming to?" said a half drunken creature of the female sex, attempting to block her progress.

Then came a fish-wife of the true Billingsgate cut.

"I say my young 'un, be off with your hungry phiz; the three livres, the grub, and the lush, are not for you, my lady, they will go out of your reach; if you wants to come in time you should get up sooner in the morning. Oh, my tidy vun, you vants a yard o' crape, I suppose, to make you like as you should; give her vat she vants, of course! Bah! is she down in the list to have the black clothes and things?"

"Oh, yes," said another; "Madame wants to be very fine; she don't care much for the frippery, but she wants the blunt."

In spite of these apostrophes, Adèle went on her way, and passing the porter's lodge without being perceived, directed her steps to a sort of open peristyle, under which was a troop of lackeys, some talking in a loud voice, others playing at cards, whilst at some

paces distance, under the vestibule, transformed into a temporary chapel, two priests were at vigils near the coffin, reciting the litanies of the dead.

"Well, it is a club?"

"Who marks?"

"You."

"I collect and deal the cards."

"Give them to me to shuffle."

"I demand four."

"Are you content?"

"I demand again."

"My lads, we must drink to-day; they drink well, they have drank well that——."

"Chut, chut."

"Do they hear us?"

"Don't you see that one of them is asleep? How he snores!"

"He is playing the serpent a little, whilst the other says his prayers."

"It is the accompaniment?"

"Yes, the bagpipe drone."

"I don't care who comes; I have done well, for I have got hold of the keys of the cellar, and that's the main thing."

"And I those of the larder."

"Oh! we'll go, and have a feast then, there's no reason why we should not. What say you, *Chasseur*?"

"Me! I am like the coachman, only make me the least sign, and, by Jove, if we do not take care of ourselves, there is nobody to take care of us; and then, you know, we don't bury a duke every day in the week. He plagued and worried himself enough when living, and we should rejoice and comfort ourselves a little after his death."

The *Miserere mei Deus* was heard.

"Is that a pipe bursting? I say, my boys, the other is waking: listen, he has got something in his throat, he would rather have a bottle of Burgundy."

"Good heavens, what a horrid smell! Don't you find it so? Has any gentleman in company got a snuff-box?"

"Here, I have one."

"Will you make use of it?"

"He is already in a state of putrefaction."

"That is no wonder; for he led such an irregular, dissipated life."

"They say he died of having taken cantharides."

"Vy, he's dead enough, no doubt on't. These here rich fellows thinks they may just do as they likes. They even has little things o' girls brought to 'em not ten years old—little babies almost. Vy, it makes von's hair stand on end to think o' sich things."

"Ah! he seduced many a one who, but for him, would never have been any thing but virtuous. What a shame! quite a disgrace. These sort of men are the pest of society."

"They are so vicious, these debauched great men, that when all means of satisfying their desires have left them, they are still devoted to their passions. Don't you remember when you drove him to his house at Mont Rouge, that he left you on the road with your carriage? It makes one shudder to think of the horrors they did with father ——— what's his name? The name is no consequence; but if I had any thing to do in the government, I would burn alive such monsters as these. They deserve any death."

"Yes; but that did not hinder him from taking the sacrament (*manger le bon Dieu*) every Sunday, and carrying a wax light in the procession."

"If that takes him to heaven: but when will they come for the body? I think they are very slow about it. Chasseur, go and see if they are on the road. Quick, quick, here are the mutes."

At this signal, the bevy of valets dispersed. *Fare thee well, Monsieur le Comte. Adieu, Monsieur le Marquis. Good day, duke: we shall meet again by and by, my dear ambassador. Chevalier, in the afternoon let me see you again.*

Such were the parting salutes and the speeches, accompanied by shakings of hands and many flourishing compliments of these gentlemen's gentlemen on parting with each other.

Adèle, who, on pushing open the door, had entered without being observed by these gentry, had not even dared to breathe hard, lest she should draw down upon herself some rebuff for her untimely and impertinent interruption. Concealed by a corner of the pall, the jest and joke and play of these liveried puppies having ceased, she appeared suddenly amongst them like an apparition.

"Where did she come from? Did she fall from the clouds?"

"Mind, mind, what do you want here?"

Each looked at her as if something marvellous had happened. Many spoke to her as they passed by, but no one awaited to hear her reply to the question they put to her. To see the precipitation with which they raised the siege, it might have been supposed that a pulk of Cossacks had been surprised in their bivouac by a French avant-guard. They were flitting about like shadows, appearing and disappearing.

Adèle went from one to the other, and said, in the most supplicating tone,—

"Monsieur ——"

"I have not time," said the passer by; who pushed her rudely to convince himself that she had a real body.

"Monsieur ——"

"I don't belong to the house."

"Monsieur le Chasseur, to whom do the poor apply?"

"The poor? I don't know. Ask that lad." (The lad was a jockey boy.)

"My little fellow, who has charge of the distribution?"

"Monsieur Euler, this woman asks who has charge of the distribution?"

Monsieur Euler was the Swiss.

"Oh! there is not much trouble in finding that out. Follow that gentleman with a plume in his hat on the steps there, with white shoes and a black cloak."

"The gentleman with the ruff and the sword?"

"Yes; the master of the ceremonies."

"Yes; the director of the quadrille figures," said a negro, striking the porter on the shoulder.

"Hold your tongue, you saucy fellow—you ebony-faced gentleman. Ah! the quadrilles are pretty things. Go, woman; you can't make any mistake: that man who is now moving away—who looks very grand, as grand as the Pope's almoner."

"I am much obliged to you, gentlemen."

Adèle approached the arranger of funeral ceremonies, and told him, in two words, the object of her request.

"Your name?" said he, drawing a list from his pocket.

"Adèle d'Escars."

"You are not down here in my list: are you only amongst the petitioners? Have you been to the administration?"

"No; but I am as poor as it is possible to be."

"That I can't help. Are you entered? Do you belong to the establishment?"

"No, sir."

"Well, then, what can you expect? The administration supplies the poor, supplies the cloth, supplies the torches, the administration supplies every thing."

"I see it but too well, there is nothing here for me," sighed Adèle; and she was about to retire, but the crowd blocked up the passages, and, without power to advance or recede, she was fixed in the centre of a groupe, the divers parties composing which pronounced these singular panegyrics:—

"Well, at last, thank God, they are going to bury this ——"

"He deserves no more honour than a dog."

"They say he has left ten thousand francs to the poor."

"Oh! much use they will be when they pass through so many hands."

"They call it a gift, but it's only a restitution: he will never give them as much as he has robbed them of."

"Did he never rob them in his life-time? Did he never drive them to beggary? a hard-hearted brute: he would not care if you had dropped dead at his feet. If all the persons he has made unhappy were present, they would reach from hence to Pontoise!"

"He was a perfect weather-cock; sometimes red, sometimes white."

"It is such camelions that borrow colours: who serve God and devil, and betray them both."

"They say he refused a confessor, and yet he was a hypocrite."

"A hypocrite! oh! that answered his purpose; but he felt his end approaching, and as there was nothing to be gained by feigning any longer, he threw off the mask. I hope that he made amends for his false oaths."

"Suppose he had recovered, would they have made a peer of him?"

"I will answer for that; but now they will pronounce over his tomb a eulogistic discourse of the most brilliant kind."

"All lies; and I will wager that they will talk about his faith."

"And on the inscription we shall have it in large letters! The marble is like paper, and bears every thing."

"*Père la Chaise* * is the plain of virtues."

"The plain of virtues! yes, to those whose pyramids point to heaven. But we poor devils! they carry us to the common ditch; a lump of earth, and all is said neither seen nor known, we leave no trace behind us."

* Père la Chaise is a celebrated cemetery in the immediate vicinity of Paris, where many celebrated persons have been interred, and whence many album-writers have collected epitaphs. TRANSL.

"But we leave regrets, and that is better; and besides, we have never injured any person."

"That I agree to; but yet, it may be a weakness, but I don't like to be thrown in the great hole."

"Why, what consequence is it when once I have ceased to be? They may do with me as they will, fling me in any place, cast me in the first hole."

"I am of this gentleman's opinion, and don't mind what's done to me a wink of the eye. To be sure this duke will have a monument; but it will be of frail material at best, and even if it were a diamond, what avails it."

"Listen; the drum beats."

"What! will there be any soldiers?"

"See! they are the veterans."

"The same that shot the maréchal!"

"The Moskwa! the *brave des braves!*"

"Yes, Ney. They did not, however, sentence him."

"I know it: they all wept like children."

"How droll they charge arms."

"Don't you see that it is to pay honours?"

There was a dull roll, which announced the moment for the procession to move.

"Come, poor, to your stations," said the master of the ceremonies.

The march began, and the crowd of assistants mixed in the procession.

Adèle, with a bursting heart, went away from the crowd of mendicants, whose satisfaction at seeing a rival defeated testified itself by a satanic burst of laughter. Forgetful of the duty prescribed to them, these privileged wretches of the funeral magnificence trampled and made a great noise with their feet: they all agitated themselves with most horrible contortions, shaking their torches which they soon contrived to extinguish that they might get the greater profit from them. Their joy was atrocious, it was like that which the devils in hell feel at the torments of a condemned reprobate and sinner. Adèle, whom they abused, redoubled her pace, without daring to cast a look behind her.

"She has had her allowance," roared out one of the furies who had saluted her when she came.

"That's plain enough," said another, "but she wouldn't believe us."

"But she has got served out for it," observed a third.

"What, here you are," shouted out another fury, "little Mother Spider, with your throat dry, and your eyes shut."

At this direct attack, Adèle, who till then had patiently endured the gross railleries of these women, turned round with a sort of dignity.

"Oh, that's mighty grand, my princess," cried out several voices.

"Take care of yourself," cried the men.

Pushed about, she attempted to expostulate, but an old man approaching her, said, "You are only getting yourself into fresh difficulties with such blackguards as these; the best way is to treat them with silent contempt. Do you not see that they are but feigned paupers?"

"Yes," said a passer by, "but they are real miscreants."

"And, moreover, downright drunkards," added one of the soldiers, "we know that well enough."

At the height of adversity there is not light so feeble that does not shine like a lighthouse of safety. Adèle still clung to the illusion, that she should discover the player who had already extended to her the hand of succour. This hope transported her; she went again to the church; she walked through the churchyard, hoping to find some person who could tell her the house of her benefactor.

"Don't make any disturbance."

"What do you mean?"

"He shall enter."

"He shall not enter."

"Blows with a halbert? that's too much."

"Down with the gendarmes, down with them."

"Hold your tongue, unless you would have your brains knocked out."

"It is a shame, a disgrace."

"Because he is an actor."

"Is not an actor as good a man as another?"

"Because they are excommunicated, they cannot be interred in holy ground."

"Hold your tongue, you excommunicatists!"

"They only had to refuse the consecrated bread when he offered it."

"And then, when he had his child baptised, they did not take his money, perhaps?"

"God! it is he!"

Anguish produced this exclamation from Adèle. Staggering, bewildered, she attempted to go some steps forward; the vociferations ceased, the tumult was appeased, swords leap from their scabbards, the horsemen mounted, and, under the escort of a troop, the hearse was taken away.

With an eye dry and dim, Adèle gazed at it as it departed. She could not shed a tear. It was all a desert around her, all had fled, all was dissipated. The circle grew larger, the buildings themselves, moving on their bases, seemed to reach the confines of the immense horizon. Adèle was oppressed, the silence of nothingness weighed on her soul like the massive pressure of a horrible nightmare; the earth turned with her, and she moved in it—was it a vision of death she saw? The toll of the bell was heard—it was the knell, the dreadful knell—the vision ceased—that which had fled returned. The doors turned on their massive hinges, and were thrown wide open. In the long perspective of unusual mourning were displayed the vanities of the atheist; the temple was converted into a sepulchre, the mortuary veil extends on all sides the galleries, the confessionals, the consecrated elements, the worship of the divine Lord of all, his pulpit of truth, his altar, his altars, his saints—the curtain of pride covers all. On a black tressel armorial bearings, escutcheons, cyphers, devices, and ornaments of silver, were seen vacillating, as do the stars of the expansive heavens in a night of

darkness. The coffin stopped—the cross was elevated, and then appeared all the clergy of the parish, priests, deacons, sub-deacons, having at their head the vicar and his curates. The corpse was laid down, the choristers and chaunters began the lamentations of *Dies iræ*. Three friends of the deceased pressed forward to take the ends of the pall; a fourth advances—they salute him with deference—they give way to him; this person, before whom all bow with so much respect, is—the tall figure again! Adèle recognised him, and said,

"It is too much! everywhere I meet him, and every where honour is paid him. This world is all deception—a lie—an injustice! I abhor the world—I detest it—I execrate it!————"

CHAPTER LXI.

A rambling brain—Despair—The charcoal-vender—A surprise—Every one for himself—There is no longer a God—Final determination—The closed door—Precaution—The chafing-dish—Unanimity—Mind the bomb—Conscience—The mouth utters, but the heart has no participation—An 'affair'—The life of the holy.

The sentiment of hatred which Adèle vowed against the whole human race could not reach a higher state of concentration; one degree more, and it would have amounted to frenzy. Exasperated and almost furious, she ran along the streets, the squares, and thoroughfares; she walked on without aim, object, or intent; and before she had any thoughts of returning thither found herself in her own quarter of the city. She was at her own door, and was going in, but, as if struck by a sudden thought or reflection, she returned on her steps, entered a shop, and coming out again, instantly went direct to her lodging.

Susanne, who was on the watch for her return, saw that she was in a most extraordinary state of mind, went to meet her, and began questioning her with much anxiety. Adèle passed her hastily without making any reply, walked across the room without looking at any one, and going towards the window, seized the iron bars with a convulsive movement, groaned, sighed, stamped her foot on the ground, and tore her hair."

Susanne. "What is it, Adèle? you frighten us all!"

Fred. "What the devil has come to her? she roars like a bull."

A Charcoal-vender (*pushing the door*). "Is this the place where they ordered the charcoal?"

Adele. (*angrily.*) "Yes; place it there. You are paid."

Char.-ven. "Well, I didn't say I wasn't. I have brought you a light too, as you desired me."

Ad. "That's right. You may go."

CHAR.-VEN. "There are two bushels, good measure, do you see? If you should want any thing else ——"

AD. "Why repeat all that? I want nothing more."

CHAR.-VEN. (*going away.*) "Well, she's not overpleased about something. You got out o'bed the wrong side uppermost this morning I think, my lady."

HEN. "I can't tell what ails her. I never saw her so before. She is like a mad woman."

SUS. "When will you please to speak? If you are in a bad humour, can we do anything? What is this charcoal for?"

AD. "Why, it's charcoal, don't you see?"

SUS. "Then you have something to cook?"

AD. "No, I have nothing."

SUS. "Well, then, you must be crazy!"

HEN. "Some one has sold her peas too hard to shell."

AD. (*interrupting her abruptly.*) "No one has sold me anything."

FRED. "Leave her alone; when the fit has left her, I know she'll speak more than we shall care to hear. I will lay a wager that presently she'll talk away in good style."

HEN. "She has a surprize in store for us."

AD. (*throwing her arms about wildly.*) "A surprize? yes, I have one in store for you!"

HEN. "Then don't try to break or distort your limbs. You make me shudder from head to foot."

AD. "What is a shudder?—nothing!"

SUS. "She has lost her wits; her head's turned."

AD. "No, it is not turned: her[illegible] my head—here"—(*taking it in her hands*).

FRED. "All that will not find us [illegible]!"

AD. "Hear me!"

FRED. "Well, don't I hear you [illegible] are a crust to eat, why not say so?"

AD. "No, no; once more I tell you, you have nothing to look for or expect."

SUS. "But this charcoal—it is that which puzzles me. We cannot eat charcoal."

AD. "Listen to me, Susanne! Listen, my friends all! I have all my senses perfectly, as well as you have them; and my determination is made. I will suffer no longer. It is not existing to live as we do. I had forty sous left; I kept them concealed; I had my motives for so doing. The moment has arrived. This is the use I intend to make of it."

SUS. "Charcoal!—instead of buying bread?"

AD. "Bread!—that would only be to protract uselessly.—No, my friends—I am weary of life! If you are like me, I know what we will do."

FRED. "Say, what?"

AD. "We will light the brasier."

SUS. "Well, what then?"

AD. "When it has become sufficiently hot, we will shut the door, close up all the entrances and openings, and place it in the middle of the room."

HEN. (*weeping.*) "What! would you have us all perish?"

SUS. "Shall we see each other die?"

FRED. "Don't snivel, you women;—Ma'amselle Adèle is right; that is the only thing left to us. You may believe me or not as you like, ma'amselle, but I have a hundred times thought of proposing it to you, but I have always found you so courageous, that I have said to myself, this should never come from a man. Now you make the proposition to me, and I will not refuse to join you. But each for himself; we do not compel others; every body is a free agent."

HEN. "You too!—how could such ideas enter your head?"

FRED. "I'faith, when there is no longer any hope—I went to the scavenger, and offered myself as a sweeper, raker of kennels; I went to the 'spice islands' (*fosses inodores*), but there was no room for

me; no work, however dirty, that I have not solicited, sued for, even to offer myself at Montfaucon and the knackers, to work at half-price; I learnt that there was a white lead manufactory at Clichy, where the workmen died like flies! well, to get admission there, they asked me for certificates. In the same way, at the glass manufactory, to be qualified to poison oneself by the vapour of mercury, you must have protectives. They told me I might get employment on the port as a ship-breaker; or on the canal, wheeling the barrow for the navigators, and I did not succeed there better than any where else. It is shocking to see the number of persons applying for work daily. At the Hotel Dieu, the Val-de-Grâce, where there is an infirmary-keeper to replace, they would not receive me, because I was not recommended by a medical man. They told me that the executioner at Versailles wanted an assistant ———"

HEN. (*with a movement of horror.*) "And did you offer yourself?"

FRED. "Quiet yourself, I have not even thought of such a thing—but only to prove how difficult it is to get any employment, there were actually more than three hundred applicants for the situation—and quite certain that they would not take a discharged prisoner. There were plenty to choose from, so if it had tempted me, I should have been ashamed of myself—when we are reduced to that!———"

HEN. "Ah! that comforts me."

SUS. "And me too."

AD. "I feared."

FRED. "I an executioner's helper! You should know me, Ma'amselle Adèle. Any other profession, I do not say—But rather than mount in that way I would scrape the puddles. Well, only yesterday and no later, I had hopes that I should get employment with those who draw the wood sledges. Well, this morning I went to see about it—some one else had got the berth—so I was once again floored."

HEN. "Good Heavens! it is sometimes when least expected, that the water comes to the mill."

FRED. "Oh, as to that, it's all chance; but with us, when we are born under an inauspicious star, it is in vain for us to contend against it. It is only Ma'amselle Adèle who has discovered the remedy."

HEN. "To destroy oneself! Her remedy is a desperate, an useless one."

SUS. "Let her kill herself if she will, she was well put to it to put such a notion into his head."

FRED. "What will become of you? Susanne, I particularly ask what will become of you?"

SUS. "I do not know, but—"

FRED. "I believe so, they promised you some stockings to mend; you would have earned a few sous; we have lived on in hopes of getting them; when you went to seek for them, what did they say to you? that you had been you know where, and they would not trust you with them."

SUS. "What a misfortune!"

HEN. "Let each of us get a basket and go and sell it."

FRED. "Sell what? To get yourself taken up—have you a permit? We must buy it, and where's the money to get the goods to sell, if it were nothing but tinder; what do you think you would get? Not as much as the hair of my beard."

SUS. "I have a great mind to propose myself in the posting bills, although it should only be as nurse to a child."

FRED. "The posting bills! Still obstacles, unless you can carry them half-a-crown; and then, dressed as you are, what master or mistress would take you into their family? Suppose even, that they were to take you, why, sooner or later, they would learn who you were, and what you had been, and if there were any robbery in the house, whom would they accuse? Susanne of course; and other persons may and will steal with impunity when a discharged convict is in the

house, for all the imputation is cast of course on them: the more I reflect, the more fully I am convinced that it is best for you as well as for me.—It is finishing our torments."

SUS. "He will not be turned from his intentions.—Oh, how much better would it have been had I allowed her to fling herself into the water!"

HEN. "If you had not persuaded her to give up the idea of drowning herself—it was nothing to her, only a yes, or a no."

AD. "Yes—it costs me something—it does, and I should lie were I to say otherwise—nothing is dearer to us than existence, and how I have clung to it; what I have done to prolong it should testify for me, having suffered all I have suffered. What resource have you that I have not? If you were younger, I would say to you, cling to life and get it as a fate, a lottery.—You have an example before your eyes.—I have been handsome, I may say it without flattery, and whither has my beauty led me? When we are advanced in life, there can be nothing to hesitate about. Would you prefer dying of hunger? Remember the night of the soldiers, and all that you then endured—Now there are no soldiers."

SUS. "No soldiers!"

AD. "They have gone."

HEN. "And the comedian?"

AD. "You must seek him in his coffin."

HEN. "Is he dead?"

AD. "I was at the church when they refused admittance to his body."

FRED. "You hear what she says, my dears.—You see Henriette—there is no actor, no soldiers for us."

AD. "There is no more well doing; there is no more humanity; there is no more religion; there is no more God."

SUS. "Say not so, Adèle. Would you draw down his malediction on us?"

AD. "His malediction!—How long, I would ask you, has it not fallen on us? But now I mock at it."

HEN. "Do not blaspheme, lest he should punish us."

AD. "Well, are we not punished beforehand? Why make yourself uneasy? Our hell has commenced."

FRED. "Let us make haste, or else the fire will go out."

AD. (putting the fire on the charcoal, and blowing it.) "Never fear, it is burning up again. I will light it very spedily. Are you resolved?"

SUS. "It will stifle us!—Help! Oh, wretches that we are—Henriette, take the bellows from her."

HEN. (weeping, shrieking loudly and sobbing by turns) "Murder, guard.—They are trying to kill us.—Ah! how am I to be pitied—Oh Lord Jesus, have mercy upon us! Good God! Good Lord! Oh, Saviour!"

FRED. (darting towards the door, which was ajar, closed it, and turning it on the double lock, put the key in his pocket.) "Now, cry as long as you like. With their lamentations they will call up the neighbours. The women, the women, they can do nothing with the women. I ask your pardon Ma'amselle Adèle, it is not you I mean, but these poor chicken-hearted things, who can only cry and do nothing else, and parbleu. Death! why it is not swallowing the sea. Death—when one is dead!—"

HEN. (throwing herself on Frederic's neck, whilst Susanne, who had seized his hands, bathed them with tears.) "Frederic, dearest Frederic, I beseech you, am not I your Henriette?"

FRED. "What would you have me say?"

HEN. "Could you have the courage to see me die before your eyes?"

FRED. (with emotion and making an effort to get rid of his feelings.) "Oh, leave me! I cannot say anything."

HEN. "Would you see my corpse?"

FRED. "That would hurt me!"

HEN. "You turn away your face—you do not answer me—look at me, dearest."

FRED. (with feeling.) "Well!"

AD. (apart.) "They will overpower him. How much do I regret that I did not do this alone!"

HEN. (embracing Frederic.) "You will not die, will you?"

FRED. "How can I resist her? oh, woman, woman! when a man loves! I consent to every thing, we will not die."

AD. "And bread?"

FRED. "We will have some. You have heard of Vidocq's band?"

AD. "But too much."

FRED. "I have the option of entering it: I shall have three francs a day, and we will share them."

HEN. "And you will be ——— Oh! dear Frederic, let us die. I propose it now."

SUS. "And I do not oppose it."

HEN. "We will die together in each other's arms; at least, I shall be sure that, after me, Frederic will belong to no one else."

SUS. "Now, Adèle, you are content?"

AD. "Yes, I am."

FRED. "How inflexible she is! she does not change from her purpose—the gulf must be leaped, and the sooner that is done, the sooner will our embarrassments terminate."

HEN. (blowing the charcoal.) "How slow it is to light!"

AD. "Blow, blow, it will soon kindle."

FRED. "Don't set the place on fire, for we are not in our own house, and there are children up stairs."

HEN. "Poor little dears, we must not burn them."

AD. "It would be doing them a service perhaps."

SUS. "There are enough of us, four persons, that is not often the case. It will be mentioned in the papers."

FRED. "They will insert it in the journals."

AD. "We shall be a theme of conversation in Paris, and that will be a vast consolation."

HEN. "Perhaps it may be of service to others, who knows?"

AD. "All the charcoal is in flame."

SUS. "We might roast an ox. And is this then our last day?"

AD. "Ah! that is not all. You do not look, they may see us from opposite, we must put the quilt against the window."

FRED. "That is useless, there are only the masons there, they are on the roof, which is very high; besides, I think it is their dinner hour, and before they return———"

HEN. "It will be all over with us. We must stop up the chimney."

AD. "Most assuredly."

HEN. (placing the quilt there.) "Frederic, I have a favour to ask of you."

FRED. "What is it?"

HEN. (lifting up an handiron.) "A woman is never so strong as a man, she has not the same strength of mind! I mistrust myself; you see this handiron.—If I should change my mind, (squeezing his hand affectionately) you understand me ———."

FRED. "*I do, I do!* Horrible situation!"

SUS. "All is ready, what must we do?"

AD. "Nothing, but lie down and await." She threw herself on the floor; Susanne, Henriette, and Frederic followed her example, the two latter embracing.

SUS. "Death, death! If I cover my face, I think I should have less fear. I cannot *see* it come." (She covers herself with a handkerchief.)

HEN. "Frederic, put my apron over my eyes, the light is fearful to me."

AD. "I will gaze on it to the last."

HEN. "I cannot draw my breath."

SUS. "My stomach swells. I am suffocating."

AD. "And I too, my head whirls."

HEN. "My brain seems to boil."

Sus. "Do you feel as I do, in a cold perspiration, and sick, oh, so sick?"

Ad. "I have a tight bandage over my brows, and a weight oppresses my limbs."

Fred. "It is strange, but I feel nothing uncommon. It is, perhaps, the effect of habit."

Ad. "My vision is disturbed. A cloth seems to pass over my eyes, they swell, I am giddy to excess."

Sus. "What an oppression!"

Fred. "Well, then, I must be made of iron."

Ad. "My blood freezes."

Fred. "And I shall survive them!"

Hen. "Frederic, my own Frederic, my heart is bursting! Oh, what pain; it tears my breast open; take away that serpent that gnaws my heart; where do you carry me? Who lifts me? Is it you? I am better now. I am well. Ah! how delightful! I am light. I am in paradise. Adieu, Frederic! my friends, pray for me."

Ad. "My head!—what an insupportable weight!—my heart! I can hear it beat!—it beats!—it swells!—what a brilliant sight!—the sun shines!—what a beautiful light! Ah! they are thrusting needles into my breast. Frederic, do you hear a buzzing sound? It is there at my ear."

Sus. (contracting her muscles, and beating on the floor.) "They will break the drum of my ear with their hammer; cruel, cruel creatures! they tear my bosom—they are quiet—'tis well, 'tis well! Ah, am I here, then is my soul made perfect!—a cloud—it passes—it is extinguished—it escapes me—I cannot retain it—mercy, great God, mercy."

Fred. "Henriette! Henriette; (shaking her) she is no more, and I!——Her teeth are clenched—How white they are!—Henriette, dear Henriette, do you not hear me? Oh! that I had a pistol, some weapon." (He rose quickly, and opening a drawer, took out a knife.) "Thank God! I can join them now—I can stab myself! there, on her body—my blood shall flow! between these

two ribs.—It beats here: does hers beat still? (He kissed her, and placed his hand upon her heart). No—(he embraced her, and placing the blade against his heart)—now let me hope that my hand fail me not."

He was about to give the deadly thrust—a noise was heard—*Mind, mind below, mind the bomb!* The knife falls from his hand, the window was burst open with great noise, the broken glass flew about the room; "*Quarante-cinq**," (forty-five) cried out, in unison with the shock, some voice in the neighbourhood; and whilst, from the top of a ladder, on which was perched a mason, this cry of consolation arose in the air: "*As many killed as wounded, and not one dead,*" an enormous piece of plaster and rubbish, projected like an avalanche down the slope of the roof, fell at Frederic's feet.

"Well," said he, "does the devil mingle with the dance?" (Then looking at Henriette), "She is happy!"

However, by the sudden irruption, the air circulated in the room, the brazier no longer threw out its blue flame, the north wind, which came in with violence, made the charcoal crackle, a spark was driven on Henriette's hand, she made a movement, and, almost at the same instant, a sort of rattling in the throat, more quick than that of the last pang, announced that life was not extinct in her companions. It was the dilating of their lungs, it was respiration resuming its course, and they were reanimating like withered flowers after the morning's dew.

"Henriette, dear Henriette, speak to me, love!" (Taking her in his arms he placed her on a seat.) "Speak to me."

* In Paris, when they break a window, the common people cry out "*quarante-cinq*," so as to produce a sound, in a measure harmonizing with the accident. It is to them a capital joke, because *quarante-cinq*, (45) is written with the two figures that make "*neuf*" (that is, in French, either *nine* or *new*). The pun is ingenious.

Henriette was slowly reviving, her mouth was half opened: at last her eyelid was raised, but beneath the light of day, which dazzled her, it speedily closed again.

"Dearest Henriette," said Frederic again, "it is I, don't you know Frederic?—it is your husband."

The purple tints which were shed over the countenance of Henriette disappeared. "Ah!" said she, (the words expiring on her lips) in a sepulchral tone, "the storm is over—how it thundered!"—(and then, recovering herself a little,) "Frederic, is it you? It does not thunder now, does it? The cold—ah! how cold, very, very cold: my feet are like icicles; chafe them, I am so cold. Shut the window .... are you mad? What fire is this?"

As well as being astonished at what she experienced, Henriette was not in a condition to attach the least remembrance of what she saw. Adèle and Susanne, who had recovered more speedily, gazed with dry and lack-lustre eyes on the brazier by which they were lying.

AD. "Is it possible? You see we cannot die though we wish it."

SUS. "Heaven is a witness . . ."

FRED. "Our hour was not come."

AD. "We must think so. A dog would die, sooner."

SUS. "A mother who wrongs her children"

FRED. "We leave none behind us—no brats."

HEN. "Seeds of misery! That would have completed our wretchedness."

FRED. "Well, we're advanced very far, certainly. What has been the use of all these precautions?"

AD. "Don't say a word about it to me, I am in a rage."

FRED. "The charcoal is lost."

AD. "Lost, say you! No, no, it is not lost: it will not kill us; let us make it give us life."

FRED. "What do you mean."

Ad. "Let us forge some keys,—we will do as others do."

Sus. "Speak lower, girl, do: if any person heard us!"

Ad. "Let them hear or not hear, what matters it? If we are denounced, well, they will take us before the judge, there will only be this; if all the world did right, the judges would have nothing to do. Come, come, henceforward I will not be such a fool as to endure hunger: the good shall suffer for the bad, so much the worse for those on whom it may fall: they will not give us, they will not allow us to earn, then we must take. Since they compel us, since they will not let us be honest, I will become the greatest thief that the earth has on its surface. If they catch me, the fall will be at the end of the ditch: I shall still have had some agreeable moments. Now, I do not know myself any longer; it seems to me that at present, I should make no more scruple of cutting a man's throat than of wringing the neck of a chicken."

Hen. "Don't say so, Adèle, it is offending God. It is against conscience."

Ad. "God! God! He would not have given us a conscience to make us die of hunger.—God! I renounce him. Conscience! what is conscience? Have, then, your *conscience*, your probity; you have experienced its worth; it is fine, very fine!"

Fred. "Do you know, ma'amselle Adèle, that it is not right to use such language. I am not pleased with you now. But if you wish us to die I am no longer agreeable."

Sus. "Oh, she is not so wicked any longer; what she says falls from her lips, but does not come from her heart."

Hen. "It is anger, but far from her real feelings."

Ad. "True, true, we will kill no person. But hear me; we must eat, I return always to that starting-place, and we have but one path before us. Hunger

makes the wolf quit the woods; if you will trust to me, we will look out for an 'affair,' and as soon as it occurs we will put the irons in the fire: what say you, my friends?"

FRED. "An affair—a robbery?"

HEN. "A robbery!"

SUS. "Why not?"

FRED. "I am the wood they make flutes of: I bend any way, and may be cooked with any sauce; but—"

AD. "Do you want courage?"

FRED. "Do you ask me?—well, a robbery then!"

AD. "But nothing more; a theft, and a theft alone, simply to acquire a positive and actual subsistence."

SUS. "That is understood: after that we will be honest again."

FRED. "Shall we?—who knows?"

HEN. "Let us first get something to boil in the pot, and then wherewithal to new dress us—not before we want both. When I think that my poor man has only a pair of trowsers to put on, and no shirt, no hat; and he must ask long enough before he could get another to change . . ."

SUS. "It is not enough to be provided just for the moment, we must have some cash in hand, a hundred sous apiece, to rub against another."

HEN. "Very true; we must try not to become again as we now are. If we had money we might carry on a little business; I would make braces, they say they sell well, and turn in a good profit."

AD. "Gently, gently: for the time present let us do all we can, my children. The life of the saints before everything."

ALL. "Yes, the life of the saints and the rest afterwards."

The friends undertook to make a tour; and three hours had not elapsed after this desperate resolution, before they had taken several impressions; keys made,

and two rooms cleared out; but this expedition was so little productive, that four days afterwards famine was again in the house. It was necessary to begin again, or to perish. They resolved on a second essay, then a third, twenty were effected in less than two months, and yet the party was nearly as badly off as before. They had flung themselve into the torrent, and the torrent hurried them headlong from crime to crime.

CHAPTER LXII.

The morning walk—Ill gotten gains bring nothing but pains—Castle in the air—Gaiety—The storm is preparing—Two keys—The new-laid eggs and the fruit-woman—The unkind landlord—A good deed brings happiness—Precautions.

One Sunday morning Adèle had gone out at day-break: Frederic, his wife, and sister, were still asleep, but awoke soon afterwards.

Sus. "It seems that Adèle has taken wing early this morning; I did not hear her go out."

Fred. "Nor I, poor devil! if we do nothing, the fault is not hers."

Hen. "Oh, no, certainly not; she does all the mischief she can."

Fred. "She has all her trouble for nothing, for the gains do not recompense the pains. Have we any bad luck think ye."

Sus. "Faith it's hardly worth while to be thieves."

Fred. "They say that profit acquired by bad means avails nobody; we don't know whether it will be profitable or not, we have never met with a good chance yet."

Hen. "Oh, it will come; we only want the opportunity."

Fred. "And whilst it is coming we are starving."

Hen. "Oh, you have no patience."

Fred. "It is not being gay enough to talk, and do nothing else all day; but that becomes tiresome."

Hen. "Even if your senses were to leave you, we should rub on."

Fred. "Yes, but very poorly."

Hen. "Leave off complaining, and if we once get in the vein——"

Sus. "If ever that happens, I will make up for lost time—I will have such breakfasts!"

HEN. "So will I: I will pay myself for past deprivations by the choicest tit bits in the world!"

FRED. "And I too! Do you think I will throw my share to the dogs? I'll pay myself for past losses! but I don't expect it."

SUS. "He who formerly used to be so merry, and laughed at every thing, is now the first to inspire us with fear and apprehension."

HEN. "He was a careless, reckless fellow; a *Roger bon temps*, (a lively, merry person) who laughed and jested at every thing: I do not recognise him to be the same man."

FRED. "It is; you must know that people change: every day we get a day older, and reflect upon it with more seriousness."

HEN. "Reflect! that does a great deal of good; here, listen! somebody comes who does not reflect much. Do you hear her singing on the staircase?"

SUS. "It is Adèle's voice. What can it be, I wonder, that makes her so merry?"

FRED. "Most certainly it is not the fine weather; for the sky is overcast, and there is over Mont Martre a cloud which will descend like a deluge."

HEN. "It looks like heavy rain."

FRED. "It is a bath in preparation."

AD. (*entering quickly, and putting two keys on the chimney place*) "My friends, no more misery! I have just tried them, they work like angels; we are masters now and will go to work at once, no later than this very day."

Lifting up her gown behind, she looked at the dilapidation of her shoes and stockings, and sang and danced at the same time:—

Tu ne vois pas, ma chère,
Elle a, elle a
Des trous à ses bas,
Et moi je n'en ai guère;
Elle a, elle a

Des trous à ses bas,
Et moi je n'en ai pas *.

FRED. "I never saw her in such a mood."

SUS. "Nor I either: she jumps and dances about. Oh! we shall most assuredly have some rain."

FRED. "Well, well, you are as gay as a lark; what's the meaning of all this?"

AD. "Why, the meaning is, that whilst you were sleeping I was at work, quietly but surely. Be easy, my dears, we will have plenty of grist for the mill! There's '*swag*,' my children! You see these keys, they open a door, and——"

SUS. "But do not keep us on the rack, we are on thorns; you see very plainly that Frederic is dying to know——"

AD. "Yourself you mean, you sly thing; he said nothing."

SUS. "Well, then, say it is myself if you like."

AD. "I will tell you all about it *(feeling in the pocket of her apron)*; here are some new-laid eggs: I had eight for our breakfast: I have eaten mine——."

SUS. "That's well; you can speak of that afterwards."

AD. "I got them at the fruit-woman's, in the Rue des Gobelins. You know the little humpbacked woman whom I like to gossip with?"

SUS. "What nonsense she talks about her fruit-woman... What is the fruit-woman to us?"

AD. "What is the fruit-woman to you! Why, if

* Look at her, my dear, and you'll see
That she, that she
Has holes in her stockings; but look at me,
I am as neat as neat can be;
Whilst she, whilst she
Has holes in her stockings; you will not see
A single one if you look at me.

TRANSL.

you'll let me tell you, you will find; if you do not wish me to tell you——"

SUS. "Speak, speak; go on your own way, you will be delivered at last."

FRED. "Do not interrupt her."

AD. "In the fruiterer's house lives her landlord, who is as great a miser as ever lived. He is so rich that he cannot count his money: his wife and he have more than a hundred francs a-day to spend, and have only a dog in their service. The fruit-seller told me all this. You must know I have chatted with her to some purpose, and not for useless gossip. I wanted to '*draw*' her, and have succeeded. Then, whilst talking with her, I kept my eyes open: without appearing to take notice of any thing, I have seen the bags which contained the crowns! With only half, I swear to you, that all our life, as long as we have to live, we should not be in want of any thing, nor be compelled to plunder. How it would turn to profit in our hands! But fortune always attends those who do not know how to make use of her. This miserly old fellow of a landlord, only think, because number eight, one of his lodgers, has not paid his rent on the day fixed, he has made him turn out, goods and all. I saw it: it was a wretched thing to see: a father of a family, six children, and the wife, who was brought to bed the previous evening. They burst into tears, unhappy wretches; they begged, they implored, they supplicated; they might as easily have softened a stone; he thrust them out into the street: the whole neighbourhood were up in arms about it. Well, said I to myself, old rogue, I will not lose sight of you; I will pay you off for this: to those who do ill, ill happens; and if I cannot treat you to a turn of my craft, the fault shall not be mine.

"From that moment I have watched for the opportunity, and to-day it presents itself. I have taken all my measures, and he shall not escape us. He is a skinflint, an usurer: there are enough who have been robbed by him, and when his turn comes——"

SUS. "One thief robbing another is fun for the devil to laugh at."

AD. "Then the devil shall laugh, depend upon it: before night this miserly landlord shall be handled; and without including ourselves, there are others who shall feel the effects of it."

FRED. "I do not clearly understand you; the tenant will have a share."

AD. "A woman just confined! and thrust her out at the door! It is abominable! If it were only ten francs, I would carry her the half of it."

FRED. "Ah! ma'amselle, that would give me great pleasure; you have an excellent heart!"

AD. "I hope so. I should be so happy if I could do all the good I would!"

HEN. "You are right: a good action confers happiness."

AD. "It is not to embarrass one's self—well-regulated charity begins at home; but to solace another, seems to be comforting one's self. I suffer when I see another suffering. Thus we agree: we will send assistance to the family; you all agree to it?"

ALL. "Yes, yes."

SUS. "Let us do to those who deserve it what we would have them do to us."

FRED. "But they must not know who it comes from, that would betray us completely."

AD. "Certainly, they must know nothing about it. Now, my dears, I will explain my plan to you: the usurer goes to Saint Maur with his wife, and they go on foot. They are not to return before to-morrow, so that we have plenty of time before us. However, as in these sorts of matters it is best to be as soon as possible. I shall start at once, you will follow me. Henriette must keep watch in the street; and whilst I draw the fruiteress to the bottom of her shop, Frederic and Susanne must get into the passage. It is the second pair of stairs at the back facing the stair-case as you ascend: there is a wicket at the door, and a stag's

foot at the bell-handle. The small key is to open the safety-latch, and the large one for the lock ; you cannot make a mistake ; you must not forget to take a crow-bar, in case there should be a chest or strong box——"

FRED. "Susanne can hide it under her petticoats."

AD. "And a ring to put into the key hole, for fear of a surprise: do not neglect to take one, we must provide against everything. You know my story with Rigottier."

FRED. "That was a lesson."

AD. "Yes, and a bitter one!—"

CHAPTER LXIII.

The treasure—Anxious moments—M. and Madame Lombard—The capricious lock—The whale and the elephant—The knitting needle—Thieves—The couple rolled heels over head—The locksmith—The ring taken out—The apron—Send for the Commissary.

But a very short time was requisite for the family to dress themselves and make preparations for the expedition. When all was ready, they directed their steps towards the Rue des Gobelins: an half hour afterwards, and Frederic, aided by Susanne, was in a train for working. Never had so much riches appeared before their eyes. There were drawers filled to the top with guineas, ducats, napoleons, and louis of all times and periods, in sacks and parcels whose arrangement betokened their contents; and moreover there was a pocket-book filled with orders for money and bank-notes. How many virtues, how much consideration, how much probity, how much *sterling* honour was here! Susanne and Frederic opened a casket, it was filled with watches, necklaces, bracelets, trinkets, precious stones. They would fain have exhausted Pactolus; with their eyes they overran the treasures of Golconda, but where were they first to begin? Whilst they were hesitating, they heard a noise, and distinguished foot-steps.

"Do not stir," said Frederic, "I think some one is coming up."

They both stood, without daring even to breathe. Some one stopped at the door and tried a key—what an anxious moment!

"We did well to return: you see what a storm was preparing."

"Come make haste, Madame Lombard, you are so very slow."

"Can't you give me time to introduce the key?"

"I think I could have opened it ten times already."

"Oh yes, you are vastly expeditious. I advise you to boast about it, when you are two hours finding the hole, and then if I did not put a hand to it—"

"That you often do. Give it to me, for you make me all in a fidget with your fumbling—"

"Fumbling! I don't fumble; don't you see that I push, but it will not go in,"

"Perhaps it has taken a whim."

"A whim!—say rather that the pipe is stopped up. It is your ridiculous custom to have crumbs in your pockets, and some of them have got in, and—"

"You shall see whether that is my fault, in a few minutes. Give it to me, and let me blow in it a little."

"Here, M. Lombard, do what you like with it; (she gives him the key.)"

"Ah, that is right. (He blowed in the pipe, knocked the wards, and after having alternately knocked and whistled in it,) It whistles perfectly well, and now ought to enter without any difficulty."

MAD. LOM. (Trying a second time.) "Without any difficulty! why it goes worse than ever."

"You don't turn it the right way, perhaps."

"I turn it neither on one side, nor the other, for it does not go in at all."

"Here, take my umbrella, women are so clumsy."

"Well, I give the place up to you, now let's see your cleverness!"

"As clever as you. (He tries to push it.) The devil, something prevents it! If I had anything to clean the pipe out: call the fruitwoman."

"Oh you are so much cleverer than I am."

She called—"Madame Bouleau!"

FRUITWOMAN. "What do you want, madame?"

MAD. LOM. "Have you anything you can lend us to clean the pipe of our key? Be so kind as to come up stairs."

FR. WOM. "Will this do for you?"

M. Lom. "What is it that you have brought me? the wire that you cut your butter with?"

Mad. Lom. "It is too weak, my dear."

Fruitwoman. "If Monsieur would put it in double."

M. Lom. "She is right."

Mad. Lom. "Double and double again, and it will not do!"

Fr. wom. "I will go and get you a match."

M. Lom. "A match! that will be of less use, for if it should break in, what should we do then?"

Fr. wom. "Well, will a piece of birch do out of the broom, will that be better?"

M. Lom. "Bring me a branch of it, the strongest you can find."

The fruiteress went down and soon returned with a twig of birch which she gave to M. Lombard.

M. Lom. "It is a faggot stick you have brought us!"

Fr. wom. "There are none thinner; by forcing it, you will be able to manage."

M. Lom. "Ah, now you have made me do a nice job: the branch has broken, and how can I get it out again?"

Fr. wom. "Do you think that a nail?"

Mad. Lom. "It would be too short."

Fr. wom. "Wait, and I will go and see if I can find in my drawers some whalebone."

M. Lom. "Whalebone!—why not offer me an elephant's bone?"

Fr. wom. "Why, what the deuce would you have! the most willing wench can only offer what she has."

M. Lom. "Have you not got a knitting needle?"

Fr. wom. "A knitting needle! let me see, who makes stockings that I know? Ah! I remember! the invalid who is in love with the porteress at number 17:—perhaps he will lend me one if I run and ask."

Mad. Lom. "Run quickly—how tiresome!"

M. Lom. "That is, if it be any use to go, and you think he has one."

Mad. Lom. "I hear her galloping along."

M. Lom. "She has not been long; here she comes, and bringing a needle with her—how lucky!"

Fr. wom. "I hope it will be a very strong one."

M. Lom. (taking the needle.) "This time we are all right." (He poked it, blew in it, knocked, knocked again, whistled in it, and knocked it again.) I really can find nothing in it, it is a very capital needle though."

Mad. Lom. "You ought to know whether or not you have got to the bottom."

M. Lom. "To be sure I do—I touch the iron, it will not go in any further; there is nothing in the pipe, and it should open the door easy enough, or else let us know the reason why, (he put the key in the hole.) Well, it is all of no use, this key is enchanted, it will not even enter the lock."

Mad. Lom. "There is perhaps something the matter with the lock, it may be overshot."

M. Lom. "I see what ails it, you have forced it."

Mad. Lom. "I should have been astonished if you had not laid the mischief on my back—always me. More likely a great deal to be some dirty blackguard, who, when passing, has filled the keyhole with gravel. Madame Bouleau does not pay attention to anything; people go up and down, and in and out, they might carry away the house; oh, *mon Dieu*, no attention to any thing."

Fr. wom. "Why, a cat could not pass but I should be at her tail, to see which way she was going."

M. Lom. "If we had a plank, I would make a bridge, and so get in by way of the kitchen window."

Fr. wom. "And so kill yourself?"

Mad. Lom. "Oh, to break your neck is nothing, but you will break a square of glass that cost four francs!"

M. Lom. "I did not think of that; four francs!

quick, quick, Madame Bouleau, go and call the locksmith; that will be by far the cheaper way."

The fruit-woman went down stairs as speedily as possible, but had scarcely reached the street when the bolt was pulled violently from the staple that confined it.

MAD. LOM. "What ails the lock?"

M. LOM. "Some one is within: we are robbed! thieves, thieves!"

On a sudden the door opened, two persons dashed out; knocked down, driven backwards, upset, Monsieur and Madame Lombard rolled over and over. Were they ghosts? or was it a hurricane, or a thunder-clap? The impetus was so great, the shock so violent, that they could not tell to what they must attribute the brutal impulse they had received. The cause had disappeared, but the effect remained, and the couple, so completely levelled with the ground, deplored the catastrophe most bitterly.

M. LOM. "Ah, ah! I am killed outright; I am murdered, ground to powder; every limb is dislocated; I am massacred, smashed to death! help, help!"

MAD. LOM. "Murder, assassination! Help, help, help! I have got hold of him; help me, M. Lombard, help me."

"M. LOM. "Ah! *mon Dieu*! help! I have broken my loins, they are beaten and mashed to a pulp; the wretches! the glass of my watch is broken too, so are my spectacles, and my limbs."

MAD. LOM. "If you don't come, I must let him go. Guard, guard!"

The fruit-woman returned, accompanied by the locksmith whom she had gone in quest of.

"Ah, what do I see? The citizen on one side, and the lady on the other; what has happened to them? What! is the apartment opened?"

THE LOCKSMITH. "They have been trying to pull the door open, and have tumbled down on all fours."

MAD. LOM. (*rising up.*) "Oh, my legs are broken."

M. Lom. "My back is all a jelly."

Mad. Lom. "If you had not lost your senses we should have caught them; look, I seized the apron of one of them?"

"M. Lom. "There were a dozen at least, and it was done so suddenly and so quickly, that I only saw five."

Mad. Lom. "My dear Madame Bouleau, they trampled all over my body! What an assault! *grand Dieu*, I am wounded all over. Support me, pray; I beseech you!"

M. Lom. (*to the locksmith.*) "My friend, lend me your assistance to crawl to my secretary."

Mad. Lom. (*who had first entered.*) "Ah, the room is in a fine plight! We have been robbed! stripped!"

M. Lom. (*falling into an arm-chair.*) "The wretches! they have left us nothing but our eyes to weep with."

The Locks.—"I could make a very good shift with what they have left behind."

Fr. Wom. "And so could I."

Mad. Lomb. "We must go and inform the Commissary, and get him to draw up a *procès verbal*, a statement."

M. Lom. "But how could they contrive to get in?"

The Locks. "That's no difficult matter: with skeleton keys. There are so many rogues."

He examined the lock, and taking from within it a small ring of iron, which had been put on the stern of the lock, he added,

"I am not astonished that you were unable to open it, they had arranged every thing well; this must be one of the trade who made this ring. Where is the apron that was left in the lady's hands?"

Mad. Lom. "This is it!"

The Locks. (*with much surprise.*) "Can I credit my eyesight? A comrade! I thought him an honest fellow—I would have laid my life upon it. Whom can we trust, if he's a rogue?"

M. Lom. "What do you mean?"

The Locks. "I was speaking to myself. Unfortunate fellow!"

M. Lom. "I am the unfortunate."

The Locks. "There are many, too many, more unfortunate than you (*pointing to the clasp of the apron.*) You see this buckle, it is my workmanship. About eleven months since I was at La Courtille, with some friends, one of whom, taking a great liking to it, asked me if I would sell it. I told him that I would not, but that if he was so much in love with it, I would willingly make him a present of it. He accepted it, we drank a bottle or two together, and from that time the clasp has been his, unless it has changed masters."

M. Lom. "And how do you call him? What is his name, eh?"

The Locks. "Frederic; he is a brother workman."

M. Lom. "A very clear account. Madame Bouleau, go instantly to the Commissary; tell him we have nearly been assassinated, myself and wife, and beg him from us to come here immediately, to receive my statement, and the evidence of the locksmith; go, go."

CHAPTER LXIV.

Great joy in the house—A cloud—The work of benevolence—Preparations for a breakfast—The larder replenished—Honest projects—The salt-cellar upset—The Commissary—The search—A visit from a lady—A recognition—Return to St. Lazare—Sentence for life.

In spite of the most imminent danger, Frederic and Susanne had preserved sufficient presence of mind to carry off the pocket-book of M. Lombard, and put into their pockets two or three bags of gold. On their return to the lodging, they only required a moment to breathe, and divest themselves of the fear they had experienced.

At the sight of the brilliant results of a capture which had nearly entailed on them such a sad termination, all the friends jumped for joy. Frederic then perceived that he had no apron; a cloud of disquietude appeared on his brow, but it soon passed away, and his gaiety returned. They employed themselves in counting the money, which exceeded in amount their utmost wishes or hopes.

Frederic. "Well, come, this time we have made a pretty good booty. We shall have no occasion to visit the *fences*."

Susanne. "We must steer our boat so as to live comfortably and happily."

Adele. "And honestly; I must return to that."

Henrietta. "That of course is included. Can we be happy unless we are honest?"

Ad. "There is nothing in the world like being able to walk along erect, and without owing anything, or having injured any body. Apropos, my dears, you are not ignorant that we have a debt to pay, and a sacred one. The first thing to-morrow morning I will go and discharge it. I will take them an order for a thousand francs."

FRED. "To whom?"

AD. "You do not remember, then, what we have promised?"

HEN. "Do you not remember, Frederic, the woman in the straw?"

FRED. "The father of the family whom our banker has thrust so inhumanly out into the streets—I do not oppose your intentions. Yes, let us give a thousand francs to these poor people, it is not too much."

The remainder of the day and the following night passed in building castles in the air; they did not close an eye all night. At four in the morning Adèle arose to go and perform the work of benevolence, to which all the party had so freely subscribed. Susanne and Henriette dressed themselves, and went out to market to make purchases for breakfast, which was to be a splendid one. Two hours afterwards they returned with abundant supplies and some domestic utensils, such as plates, fire-irons, several stew-pans, a gridiron, a spit, and a walnut-wood table.

SUS. "Put it down there, my good fellow; here's something for your trouble. Are you satisfied?"

PORTER. "Forty sous! If the rich paid as generously, bread would not be so dear; any other time when you want me ——"

HEN. "Stop, and have something to refresh you; they are going to bring up some wine, and I am sure he has deserved to have a drop of something to drink."

PORT. "You are very good, ma'am."

A VINTNER'S MAN. "Here's the twelve bottles of wine you asked for; there is not a drop of water in it: all neat, and good measure, like yourself."

FRED. "Have you got your corkscrew?"

V. MAN. "I never go without it."

FRED. "Draw six corks for us then to begin with."

V. MAN. "Will you have any more whilst I am here? It will give me no trouble if you wish me to do it."

FRED. "No, it is enough."

V. MAN. "Since that will do, I take my leave of this amiable society."

HEN. *(pouring out the wine)* "Let those who will drink come here. Porter, here is yours; it is the fullest; you have the first draught; these are new glasses."

FRED. "Who drinks? who drinks?"

PORT. "Since you are so kind as to invite, your health, ladies! yours, my worthy citizen!"

He laid his glass down on the table, and went out.

Frederic, then beginning to empty the baskets, said, "Peas, the kettle, French beans, peaches; ah, this fruit is a treat! and we must refuse nothing that is good."

HEN. "He must be poking his nose every where: I tell you that there is nothing more."

FRED. "Ah! what is that?"

SUS. "Whitening to clean the windows."

FRED. "Ah, that is very necessary, the whitening."

HEN. "Did you think we were going to live always in such mess and dirt?"

SUS. "No, sir; I mean that here we shall be like living in a little palace."

HEN. "So that one can admire one's self in the squares of glass."

FRED. "Coffee, sugar, brandy! Ah, ah! only see here what a prize!—a leg of mutton! I never was more delighted! I should not be astonished to find a roasting-jack."

HEN. "Yes, my dear, a roasting-jack!—the spit shall turn to-day. Come, quickly, Susanne, and lend me a hand, that we may have all ready before Adèle returns, that we may only have to place ourselves at table."

They had soon made the preparations for this first feast, the produce of an opulence after which they had so long sighed; when the leg of mutton was cooked to a turn, Susanne began to lay the cloth.

HEN. Well, Frederic, what do you say to it? Have we not done everything in style?"

FRED. "I see that you understand these matters perfectly."

SUS. "Who now would venture to call us any thing but gentlefolks?"

FRED. "Who would venture to do anything of the sort but slanderers?"

SUS. "Does not this look well?"

FRED. Capital!"

SUS. "Ah, now we want some plate; but Paris was not built in a day!"

FRED. "Oh, we can eat our partridges without orange sauce."

HEN. "Never mind, I like to have it though; it does no harm in an establishment; *(she seated herself on Frederic's knee)* we shall have some; sha'nt we? It is so genteel (*embracing him*). Would you like to be dead now?"

FRED. "No, i'faith."

HEN. "How kind was the charcoal not to destroy us!"

SUS. "I should be very sorry not to find myself in this world. It proves that, however wretched or miserable we may be, we ought never to destroy ourselves."

HEN. "But for the masons, but for the plaster and rubbish which fell so opportunely, the worms would have eaten us very soon."

FRED. "Can't we find some other topic of conversation? What is past, let it be past; there is no occasion to think further upon it."

SUS. "Yes, speak of something else: mirth for ever! long live jollity!"

FRED. "I have a devil of an appetite."

HEN. "And so have I: there will be no occasion to press me to eat; I shall play a famous knife and fork."

SUS. "If Adèle were but here, we might begin at once."

HEN. "She cannot be long. Is it she who is making all that noise outside?"

FRED. "I should think not, unless she is bringing the family with her."

SUS. "And she is quite silly enough to do such a thing: Henriette, go and see."

HEN. "How curious you are."

In crossing the room she ran against the table.

SUS. "The giddy girl! she has upset the salt-cellar!"

HEN. "Oh, never mind; I will throw a little over my left shoulder."

She then went to the passage; and returned with looks of fear.

"My friends, we are lost!"

The room was instantly filled by a troop of gendarmes and police officers, headed by a commissary.

"In the name of the law," said the magistrate, "I command you to give me all your keys. Gendarmes, whilst we make the search, do you watch this man and that woman; I shall look for them at your hands."

A BRIGADIER. "Well, they shall not escape."

The COMMISSARY. "It appears that they have a festival here. *(Observing a snuff-box)* If I am not mistaken, here is one of the objects specified in the declaration. Let us see: a tortoiseshell box with a gold rim; on the lid, the portrait of Madame Lombard, chased on a medallion; on the reverse, the united cyphers of the two, in hair, with the date, and a heart in flames, with a hearts-ease in a knot of love. This answers the description precisely. Gentlemen, Madame Lombard is here; you can judge as well as myself, if you look at this, which perfectly coincides with the description given."

One of the ASSISTANTS. "There can be no doubt of it."

COM. "Then we have detected the thieves. (*to Frederic*) Do you know one Jacques Richard, of the Rue des Gobelins?

FRED. "I had a companion named Richard, but he resided in the faubourg Poissonnière."

Com. "The same. Have you never had any thing that was his?"

Fred. (*Aside*) "The apron he sold me.—I see, Monsieur le Commissaire, that all denial will be useless. I committed the robbery."

Com. "We did not require your confession: we had abundance of proof.—(*He produced the apron, which he showed him.*)—Do you recognize this as belonging to you?"

Fred. "I recognize it but too well."

Com. "Are you not a freed convict?"

Fred. "Yes, I was."

Com. "These ladies, too—we have some accounts of them. Gendarmes, confine this youth, and put the handcuffs on the women. Do not spare them."

Fred. "They are not guilty."

Com. "Gendarmes, do your duty."

Whilst they were executing the orders of the Commissary, some one knocked gently at the door. A police officer opened it, and a lady entered whose almost elegant appearance and decent exterior raised a prejudice in her favour.

Com. "What is the lady's pleasure? The lady does not look like a thief; but, under existing circumstances, I cannot do otherwise than inquire what may be her errand here?"

Lady. "What I want to do here? I came to bring some work."

Com. "You came, you say, to bring some work?"

The Lady. (*Opening her basket.*) "Here, look, there is no occasion for mystery. These are muslin bands which I have brought to be embroidered. There are thirty-four ells: must I unfold it?"

Com. "No, no; that is not necessary: but since you work, of course you are in business?"

Lady. "I keep articles of embroidery, and have an assortment of the newest kind. You are married, sir, I presume: if your lady should wish to make a

few purchases, this is my address.—(*Giving him a printed card.*)—Madame Derval, Boulevard des Invalides, near the Rue de Babylone. She will find at my house all she may require, and on fair terms. I am very accommodating."

Com. "I see it is truth. This lady's visit has nothing suspicious about it. The motive is a natural one, and there is no reason why she should be detained. I beg your pardon a thousand times over, madam; but, in our situation, we are sometimes compelled to appear rude."

At the moment when the lady, just on the point of retiring, replied by a courtesy to the excuses which the commissary made, two other police-agents arrived—Coco Lacour and Fanfan Lagrenouille; who, perceiving her, looked at her with peculiar attention.

C. Lac. "I think I have the honour of knowing madame."

F. Lag. "And I am sure that I have seen her somewhere."

Lady. "Possibly; but you have the advantage of me."

(This was said with an air of embarrassment.)

C. Lac. "But surely you know me?"

Lady. "Really, Sir, I do not."

F. Lag. "The more I examine the lady, the more convinced am I that I am not mistaken. On the word of Lagrenouille, I know you. Come, no *gammon*: you are an old hand. Confess: come."

Lady.—(*Whose agitation became more visible.*)—"I really don't understand you, Sir."

F. Lag. "Stuff, stuff! You know the *mot* well.—(*To Coco Lacour*)—She's one that can *patter flash* as well as you or I."

C. Lac.—(*With eagerness.*)—"I am *fly*. You are the old lady of Lerouge. Your name is Adèle d'Escars?

Lady.—(*Stammering.*)—"I!— I!—. You mistake. That is not my name."

F. Lag. "You are right, Coco: it is Adèle! It is she as surely as I shall die in day."

C. Lac. (*putting his hand into the lady's basket and feeling in it*) "I will wager that there is a bit of smuggling here; it sounds like iron."

"Let me be sure what it is."

Lady. "I will spare you the trouble." She opened the basket, and taking out a bunch of keys with a bundle of receipts, which she threw into the middle of the room.

"Yes, I am Adèle, and what then?"

Com. "She will make the quartette."

Brigadier. "The country dance is then complete."

Com. "This young lady must be strictly watched. Keep an eye on her."

Before the tribunal Adèle confessed all her crimes; but to extenuate her misdeeds she joined to the avowal a recital of her troubles. The jury groaned to hear them; but the narration did not alter a sentence to perpetual confinement. It was the first time that so terrible a sentence was carried into execution against a female.

When she came to have her head shaved, and to put on the gray frock, Adèle shed a torrent of tears: "After having strived by every means to be honest or to die, to be thrown alive into the tomb! These gates of Saint Lazare, which I have seen close upon me, will never open again. Never! never! for perpetuity! for perpetuity!" she repeated incessantly, and in the most heart-rending tones, and her words half stifled with sobs. These sorrows have not yet terminated—Adele suffers yet.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE CHEVALIERS GRIMPANTS.

The *donneurs de bonjours*—The library of a *bonjourier*—The thin shoes—The sins of families—Perpetual laughter—The goupineur à la desserte—The mistaken forgers—Advice to the reader.

The *Chevaliers Grimpants*, called also *voleurs au bonjour, donneurs de bonjours, bonjouriers*, are those who introduce themselves into a house and carry off in an instant the first movable commodity that falls in their way. The first *bonjouriers* were, I am assured, servants out of place. They were at first few in number, but, soon acquiring pupils, their industry increased so rapidly, that from 1800 to 1812, there was scarcely a day that robberies were not committed in Paris of from a dozen to fifteen baskets of plate. Coco Lacour, from whom I have this fact, has told me that, at the commencement, all the *bonjouriers* made a common purse; but at a later period, when they found amongst them idlers, who, without taking the least trouble, or making the slightest exertion, were desirous of sharing in the common spoil and general produce, this co-fraternal combination ceased to exist, and each began to work solitarily, and on his own account.

The most famous bonjouriers, at least those who were pointed out to me on my entrance into office, were *Dalessan, Florent, Salomon, Gorot, Coco Lacour, Francfort, Cheinaux, Hauteville, Mayer, Isaac, Levi, Michel, Têtu*, and some others whose names do not at this moment occur to me.

The *Almanach du commerce, l'Almanach royal*, and that with twenty-five thousand addresses in it, are, for a bonjourier, the most interesting works that can be published. Every morning, before they go out, they consult them; and when they purpose visiting any

particular house, it is very seldom that they are not acquainted with the names of at least two persons in it; and that they may effect an entrance, they inquire for one when they see the porter, and endeavour to rob the other.

A *bonjourier* has always a gentlemanly appearance, and his shoes always well made and thin. He gives the preference to kid before any other leather, and takes care to bruise and break the sole that it may not creak or make any noise; sometimes the sole is made of felt; at other times, and especially in winter, the kid slipper, or dogskin shoe, is replaced by list shoes, with which they can walk, go up stairs, or descend a staircase, without any noise. The theft *au bonjour*, is effected without violence, without skeleton keys, without burglariously entering. If the thief sees a key in a door of a room, he first knocks very gently, then a little harder, then very loudly; if no person answers, he turns the handle, and thus enters the antechamber. He then advances to the eating-room, penetrates even to the adjoining apartments, to see if there be any person there; returns, and if the key of the sideboard is not to be seen, he looks in all the places in which he knows it is generally deposited, and if he finds it, he instantly uses it to open the drawers, and taking out the plate, he places it generally in his hat, after which, he covers it with a napkin, or fine cambric handkerchief, which, by its texture and whiteness, announces the gentleman. Should the *boujourier*, whilst on his enterprise, hear any person coming, he goes straight towards him, and accosting him, wishes him good morning (*le bonjour*) * with a smiling and almost familiar air, and inquires if it be not Monsieur "such an one," to whom he has the honour of addressing himself. He is directed to the story higher or lower, and, then still smiling, evincing the utmost politeness and making a thousand excuses and affected bows, he withdraws. It may so happen,

* Whence the name of "*bonjourier*," &c.—TRANSL.

that he has not had time to consummate his larceny, but most frequently the business is perfected, and the discovery of loss only made too late to remedy it.

At the first sight, nothing can be more amiable or more prepossessing than the countenance of a *bonjourier:* he has an incessant smile on his lips, he is affable, respectful, even when he has no object in being so, but that is all trick and grimace. After a few years exercise, he laughs in spite of himself; it is a habit, which at length becomes chronic, and he does it habitually, and without consciousness. We do not meet *bonjouriers* every day, but at each moment we may find ourselves face to face with young abbés, or old unfrocked priests; and a visage modelled at the Seminary never loses the form which has been systematically imprinted on it. If a devotee's mien may be retained for ever, we may easily credit the same perpetuity for a smiling, simpering countenance. If you doubt what I say, go to the petite Rue Sainte-Ann, and ask to see M. Coco.

Sometimes, despite his elegant and insinuating way, it happens that the *bonjourier* pitches on persons who are acquainted with his character and penetrate his intentions, and not only suspect, but search him. In this case, if he has the property found upon him, he falls at the knees of the persons who are storming at him, and to appease them and induce them to take pity on his situation, he tells them, with tears in his eyes, a doleful tale of his wants, his woes, his tribulations; a tale already got by heart for the occasion, before he started on his perilous vocation. He belongs to honest parents: the dire passion of gambling has tempted, urged, impelled him into crime: it is his first attempt; if he be handed over to justice and the severity of the laws, his father, mother, family, will expire of shame and grief. If his ready tears produce the anticipated and successful effect, and he be told to go hang himself some where else, his repentance lasts until he attain the threshold: if they be inflexible, he is in despair

until the police arrive, but when that has occurred, he resumes his pristine serenity, and the muscles, pregnant of a smile, return to their accustomed laxity.

The majority of the thieves in this particular line commence their incursions with morning, at the hour when the housekeepers go out for their cream, or have a gossip whilst their masters and mistresses are in bed. Other *bonjouriers* do not open the campaign until near dinner time; they pitch upon the moment when the plate is laid upon the table. They enter, and in the twinkling of an eye, they cause spoons, forks, ladles, &c. to vanish. This is technically termed *goupiner à la desserte*, (clearing the cloth).

One day one of these *goupineurs à la desserte* was on the look out in a dining room, when a servant entered carrying two silver dishes, between which were some fish. Without being at all disconcerted, he went up to her, and said,—"Well, go and bring up the soup, the gentlemen are in a hurry."

"Yes, sir," said the maid, taking him for one of the guests, "it is quite ready, and if you please you can announce the dinner."

At the same time she ran to the kitchen, and the *goupineur*, after having hastily emptied the dishes, thrust them between his waistcoat and shirt. The girl returned with the broth, the pretended guest had retired, and there was not a single piece of silver left on the table. They denounced this theft to me, and from the statement given, as well as the description of the person committing the robbery, I thought I had recognised my man. He was called *Cheinaux*, alias *Bayer*, and was discovered and apprehended in Saint Catherine's market. His shirt was marked with the circumference of the dishes, in consequence of the remains of the sauce left in them.

Another body of *bonjouriers* more particularly direct their talents to furnished houses.

The individuals forming this class are on foot from the dawn of day. Their talent is evinced by the adroit

mode in which they baffle the vigilance of the porters. They go up the staircase, sometimes on one pretext, and sometimes on another, look round them, and if they find any keys in the doors, which is common enough, they turn them with the least possible noise. Once in the room, if the occupant be asleep, farewell to his purse, his watch, his jewels, and all that he has that it is valuable. If he awakes, the visiter has a thousand excuses ready.

"A thousand pardons, sir, I thought this was No. 13;" or, "Was it you, sir, who sent for a bootmaker, tailor, hairdresser, &c. &c."

Jews and some females, not all Israelites, are the principal persons who carry on the war in this department. More than one traveller, stripped by them whilst sleeping, has been left with only the shirt on his back.

Reader, who would not have any apprehensions from the *Chevaliers grimpants*, never leave the key in your door: never hide that of your sideboard, for they will certainly find it; but conceal it in your pocket. Let your porter have a bell or a whistle, to indicate the arrival of a stranger, and the story he is going to; don't let him be bootmaker, tailor, nor shoemaker; let him have no trade but that of a porter. Do not allow him to sweep in the morning, without keeping his door shut, or else leaving on the look out his daughter or some other person. Do not forget, as I believe I have told you before, that thieves are in the practice of searching under the mattresses, the carpets, in the vases, the sideboards, behind pictures, in the corners of the fireplaces, in the curtains, &c. Desire your servants never to allow any person to remain alone, in any room belonging to your apartments. If any one in your absence asks permission to leave a line for you, let your servant mind how he goes to fetch the paper; rather desire him to send for it, or else desire the visiter to leave it at the lodge, where they will give him what he asks for.

Distrust all hawkers of glass, sellers of wooden spoons, menders of crockery, savoyards, and that roving army of men and women who carry about muslins, linen, calico, &c. &c. Follow the milliners who go up stairs with their cards and boxes, sellers of decorations for toilettes, and others who come to offer you goods: all these trotters and trampers are thieves, or in alliance with thieves, to whom they give all requisite information. Always be on your guard when there are, or after there have been, workmen in the house you inhabit. Most frequently one or more robberies are committed after the departure of masons, tilers, whitewashers, bricklayers, &c. Never deal with *old clothes' men, old lace buyers, but in the street.* If you can do otherwise, never lodge in the same house with a washerwoman, a medical man, a midwife, a commissary of charity, a pawnbroker, a justice of the peace, or commissary of police, a lawyer, or a constable. Avoid houses where there is much bustle, and perpetual ingress and egress of people.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE BONCARDIERS.

The *boncardier* on the look-out—Keep a good dog—Advantages of disorder—Children's playthings and crockery—The extended cord—Detonating peas—Regular passports.

THE BONCARDIERS are thieves who rob shops during the night. *Boncardiers* never plunder from a shopkeeper without having first reconnoitred the obstacles that may be in the way of their enterprise. When they have projected an entrance into any particular shop, morning and evening, for several successive days, they lurk about in the neighbourhood, to assist at the opening or shutting up of the place. They then remark how the fastenings are made, if they are difficult or not to draw back: they endeavour to ascertain whether or not there be a dog on the premises, or if any person sleeps there. Frequently, to be more assured and to obtain all the information they require from the fountain head, they go to the shopkeeper under a pretence of purchasing; sometimes they do actually buy, but always mere trifles, which they are as long in deciding upon as possible. No one is so indecisive as a *boncardier* on the look out: he comes, he goes, comes again, goes again, returns—and when the price is agreed upon he still wavers as to his choice.

The shopkeeper who happens to perceive the same individual espying the approach to his establishment, or has a visit from one of those purchasers who bate him down, "*chisel*" him down, penny after penny, will do well to be on his guard. Let him procure a good dog: the largest are the best for defence; but for watching, I decidedly give the preference to a small one, that breed which has the finest ear and sleeps the lightest. The custom of having some person to sleep

in the shop is one that cannot be too strongly insisted on or commended.

The *boncardiers* are generally well known thieves, already marked by the police, and, therefore, but seldom go out by day, for fear of meeting the police-agents.

Most generally a shopkeeper, before he retires to rest, desires his clerk of shop girls to put every thing in its place: chairs, stools, ladders, and all the moveable furniture. He would act more wisely were he to desire them to do precisely the contrary, for the greater the confusion the more thieves are perplexed and embarrassed. He would do much better were he to leave his shop in disorder, a chair upset, a stool well placed for any one to tumble over; the least noise, and consequently the slightest fall, leads to inevitable detection. *Boncardiers* seldom visit crockery sellers, or dealers in children's playthings and toys: at the shops of the former breakage is to be feared; at the latter, the incumbrances are dangerous. What perils to encounter in traversing in darkness amongst legions of animals! a hand touches them, a foot is awkwardly placed on one, snap they go: a shepherd is knocked in two, or a lamb bleats. Flight is inevitable—the alarm is given.

The country *boncardiers* are for the most part ostensibly tradespeople who travel. They never arrive but at night at the place where they intend to levy contributions. A few moments afterwards they commence their operations, and the goods, as fast as they are stolen, are deposited in their travelling cart. The job finished, they proceed to another place, where they sell piecemeal what they stole wholesale. If they have appropriated to themselves articles of gold or silver easily recognized, they convert them into ingots.

One of the first cares of a *boncardier* is to alter the appearance of the booty they have acquired. If they be silks, or woollens, or cambrics, &c., they take off the end of each piece, and cut out, or in some way de-

stroy, the mark or number that can indicate that they procured them not in the regular way of trade, although they sometimes visit the manufacturers themselves. The fall of a few light planks placed on a very slight cord extended across the shop about four or five feet from the ground, is the best trap that can be laid for the detection of a *boncardier*, particularly when they have commenced their expedition without a dark lantern. When they walk groping along, their hands are thrust forwards, and it may happen that they touch the cord; but then the thieves gain nothing, for the slightest motion communicated to the string will cause the planks to fall, and considerable noise is produced; the thieves fear that some persons will come, and as they have no inclination to be caught in the very act, *flagrante delicto*, however bold or determined they may be, they make off as fast as possible. Detonating peas thrown on the floor may also cause a timely explosion and alarm.

There are not means wanting whereby to protect persons and their property from the attempts of the boncardiers; but these methods are only efficacious whilst kept secret, and it would not be prudent to divulge them here. A German proverb says that "*a good lock makes a skilful thief*:" that is, because a good lock is not a mystery, but I fear to explain myself fully.

I think these thieves might be reduced to complete inaction if honest folks would be advised to reflect on the circumstances which have thwarted the best possible devised plans for effecting a robbery. During some years, working locksmiths have imagined a multitude of secrets, traps, and surprises; but all these inventions, so very expensive, are not within the reach of the community at large. Let those persons who wish to be in security at a small expense, and protect themselves and property, come and consult me, and I will, with pleasure, initiate them into plans of but trifling cost. Robbery is like swindling, we can annihilate it when we will; but it is only confi-

dentially that I can reveal to the parties interested the system which must infallibly lead to this result without the vigilance of the police, which is so frequently eluded.

Whilst mentioning the country *boncardiers*, I have forgotten to remark, that, as well as the *escarpes* or assassins by profession, they are always furnished with regular passports, very correctly examined by the authorities of the districts through which they chance to pass. It must be remarked, that it is in France only, that honest persons incur any risk in travelling without papers: rogues, on the contrary, take care how they bring themselves under the law and ordinances, by virtue of which a *brevet de circulation* is required for the least change of place. If I were a gendarme, the person bearing a passport that had undergone the *visa* should always be suspected by me. Dangerous vagabonds and ramblers have great care how they have it noticed, and set down, as it were, at every step, that they are not in a state of vagabondism, or wandering about without end, purpose, or business. The man of irreproachable character gives himself but little uneasiness respecting these formalities; he passes them by, either because he is negligent, or because he has an objection to placing himself in contact with anything that bears the name of police. As he has a consciousness of his own innocence, both as respects his motions, his intents, and his actions, he does not think that every body in the world should have a right to say to him, "*Where are you going to? Where do you come from?*". If he loves his dignity, his liberty, his independence, a passport is to him a real humiliation, because the necessity of pulling it out whenever and wherever it is asked for, exposes him to the inquiries, to the impertinent observations of a gendarme, who can scarcely read, or of a patrol who is no better informed. The gendarmes themselves are so well persuaded to ask any person for his passport is to affront him, that they very seldom nquire of well-dressed persons: they generally content

themselves with looking at them, and saluting them as they pass.

A well-dressed man is perhaps a friend of the attorney-general, the *sous préfet*, or the mayor; a well-dressed man is perhaps a man in office, whom it is best not to disturb. The injunction to show a passport is always more or less offensive; it is an order which offends self-love, because it comes from so low a source, and there is no citizen who does not esteem himself, and think himself, higher in rank and consideration than a gendarme. I say that this injunction is an order. I add that it is a most imperative order, because it is impossible not to obey it: and then, by a very natural susceptibility, the feelings revolt at the thoughts of a motiveless suspicion. The law prescribes, that the gendarme should consider as suspected every individual whose countenance is not familiar to him. Thus, I am suspected, not because my conduct has legalized this species of precaution, but from the sole fact of my existence; the law insults me.

This is not all; according to political circumstances, or the caprices of local authorities, a passport applied for has more than once been refused. A passport, then, is a permission, it is moreover a tax. Let us hope that, in future, all the inconveniences that I have described will disappear. I do not presume that they will entirely do away with passports, but that they will suppress the abuses and vexations to which they give birth, and that they will impose on us no longer those superfluous posting-bills, in which the vagueness of a description that suits every person, exposes us to perpetual suspicion and impertinence. Remember the unfortunate Chauvet, the victim of a mistake of M. the king's attorney-general of Saint Quentin.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE DETOURNEURS AND DETOURNEUSES.

The good hiding-place—The customer in a hurry—Magic words—The *preparateurs*—Boxes with double bottoms—Secret pockets—The child on the counter—A woman who knew how to handle her feet—Advice to jewellers—The mendicant—The *chipeurs* of distinction.

The robbery *à la detourne* is that which is effected whilst making purchases at a shop. This species of plunder is practised by individuals of both sexes; but the *détourneuses*, or *lady prigs*, are generally esteemed more expert than the *detourneurs*, or *gentlemen prigs*. The reason of this superiority consists entirely in the difference of dress; women can easily conceal a very large parcel. I have followed *detourneuses* who, having between their thighs a piece of stuff twenty-five or thirty ells in length, walked without letting it fall, and went in this way for a considerable distance without appearing the least encumbered.

This is the mode adopted by the thieves, male and female, *à la detourne*. One of the gang goes to a shop and asks for several descriptions of goods, which he has opened, and whilst he appears occupied with choosing, one or two accomplices come in to purchase other goods. They always ask for the articles which are kept in the upper shelves, and behind the shopkeeper; and whilst he is turning his back to seek for the goods asked for, one of the thieves takes up what is most convenient and nearest, and immediately makes off.

Robberies *à la detourne* are very frequent both in Paris and in the country; they are committed in great numbers at the fairs of St. Denis, Beaucaire, Guibray, Rheims, Metz, and Montmerle, near Lyons.

The *detourneuses* are always elegantly attired, unless they are dressed like countrywomen, and then their

garb is rich: they have what they call good and handsome, and for the most part represent themselves to be shopkeepers.

The best way to escape their clutches is not to show them any new articles until you have put away that first produced. Thus it is easy to count what is put on the counter. In retail shops it would be an advisable plan, when there are many customers to serve, that from time to time the shopmen should say to each other, *deux sur dix* (two on ten), or else, *allumez les gonzesses* (twig the prigs). I will beat a thousand to one that, on hearing these words, the thieves, who have very fine ears, will make haste to take themselves away.

Detourneurs and *detourneuses* employ all sorts of expedients to attain their object, and rob the shopkeeper. They who usually fill the character of *preparateurs* select before hand and lay aside on the counter the articles they wish to appropriate to themselves; as soon as all is ready, and the moment is opportune, they make a signal to their accomplices who are outside, They enter, wish to be served, and are in a great apparent hurry; the shopkeeper, not to lose a customer, divides his attention, and whilst he is puzzled what and who to answer, the goods disappear. Thieves who prig clear muslin lace, napkins, or other light and small articles, have with them boxes made of pasteboard, and apparently carefully tied up, but which have a false bottom which is moveable, and gives a facility of introducing underneath those articles on which they lay them down.

The *detourneuses* have pelisses or mantles, the lining of which form a pocket large enough to contain many articles; when they have not cloaks they have shawls, of a size to favour their projects; the petticoats of those who are dressed like peasants are, in fact, game bags, with secret pockets and divisions.

Some *detourneuses* are attended by a nurse, who carries a child, dressed in a very long frock. The nurse places the child on the counter, and, on lifting it up,

secretes also those articles which her mistress has placed conveniently in the way. *Detourneuses* of an inferior grade have baskets with a double bottom. I knew a celebrated plunderer of lace, named Dumaz, who to attain her ends acquired a singular knack. They showed her Mechlin or English point lace, and, on examining it, she endeavoured to drop a piece, and, if it were not perceived, with her right foot, the toes of which were at liberty, she placed the lace cleverly in her shoe, which was made large enough to receive it. Sometimes, before Madame Dumaz left the shop, the shopkeeper missed the lace; she insisted on being searched, no one would ever think of a receiving shoe, and as they found nothing, they were compelled to apologise to her, and to think that the piece of lace had disappeared before she came in. Who the deuce would have imagined that it was requisite to examine her feet as well as hands? The catechism only alludes to the picking and stealing of the hands.

Jewellers are very subject to visits from *detourneurs*. One named *Velu*, alias *Henri*, an officer of the free company of Simeon, passed his time in considering the jewels and watches exposed to view, and whenever he discovered a mass of rings, or other valuable ornaments, which, according to custom, are laid out in cases placed in the exterior window, he observed them with attention, and the next day went to the identical shop to purchase a ring. According to their usual practice they presented to him several to choose from, and whilst appearing to try one on, he abstracted some articles from the groupe of gold ornaments, and substituted one similar in appearance, but unfortunately only of brass. If the rogue had not purchased, they might have suspected the fraud, but he did not try to bate them down, and paying the price demanded, the brass was placed in the shop front to await the coming of another customer.

One *Florentin* was one day at a jeweller's, purchasing brilliants, unset; a man came to the door asking for

charity. Florentin took a piece of money from his purse and gave it to him; the piece of money slipped from his fingers, the beggar stooping down, picked it up and went away.

This circumstance was scarcely remarked. The purchase concluded, Florentin laid down four hundred francs, and had a bill of parcels given to him. All was settled, when at the moment he had closed the parcels, the jeweller perceived that he missed a gem valued at from five to six thousand francs; they looked everywhere for it; the paper containing it could not be found. Florentin said that he would not go out until they had searched him. That they might not disoblige him, they did search, but nothing was found on him but the purchase he had just completed; he had excellent papers and testimonials with him, and everything tended to prove that he was a man of integrity and good conduct. They let him go, and whither did he bend his steps? to rejoin the mendicant called *Tormel*, alias *Franz*, his accomplice, who, with the piece of money, had also picked up the parcel of diamonds which Florentin had expertly let fall.

Shopkeepers of what class soever, particularly retailers, cannot be too much on their guard: they should never forget that in Paris there are thousands of male and female thieves *à la detourne*. I here only speak of robbers by profession; but there are also *amateurs*, who, beneath the cover of a well-established reputation, make small acquisitions slyly and unsuspectedly. They are very honest people they say, who with little scruple indulge their propensity for a rare book, a miniature, a cameo, a mosaic, a manuscript, a print, a medal, or a jewel that pleases them; they are called *Chipeurs*. If the *Chipeur* be rich, no heed is paid to him, he is too much above such a larceny to impute it to him as a crime; if he be poor, he is denounced to the attorney-general, and sent to the gallies, because he robbed from necessity. It must be owned that we have strange ideas as to honesty and dishonesty.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

VOLEURS ET VOLEUSES SOUS COMPTOIR.

Both sides of the way—The watchmaker and the hatter—Dupes and accomplices—*La Connarde*—The dispute.

The theft *sous comptoir* is of modern invention, and it is necessary for the interest of trade to describe how it is effected. Individuals, for the most part females dressed like servants, look out in a large street for two shops situated nearly opposite to each other. Suppose them to be respectively the one a watchmaker's, the other a hatter's; the thief enters the hatter's, and asks for a hat, taking care that what she wants is not ready; it requires trimming, which will take an hour; in the mean time she goes and returns, re-enters the shop of the hatter, stands at the door, and when she is sure that the watchmaker has seen her, she crosses quickly over the street, and going to the shop, says

"Mr. So and so—(giving the hatter's name) begs you will let me have two gold watches, from about a hundred-and-twenty to a hundred-and-thirty francs value; it is for a present I desire to make to my brother, but master wishes to choose."

The watchmaker recognizes the servant, and feeling quite safe, gives her the watches, which she takes away with her. The watchmaker from his counter can see her return to the hatter's; he almost assists at the examination of the articles, sees them pass from the hand of the hatter to those of his men, and cannot have but a single doubt,—that they do not please. A moment afterwards the trimming of the hat is terminated, the servant takes it, and going over to the watchmaker, says to him—

"Sir, my master has chosen that of a hundred and

thirty francs; I am going a little way to carry a bonnet home, and when I return I will come and settle with you, but you must take off something."

"Well, well, we shall see," says the watchmaker.

One hour, two,—three pass away, no one returns; he then determines on going over to the hatter's, when the whole affair is explained.

It frequently occurs that two shopkeepers are robbed by the same person. One of the female practitioners in this line, named *Connarde*, went to a linendraper's, and asked for some cards of lace for the wife of the goldsmith opposite: the draper did not hesitate to give them; *la Connarde* with a bandbox in her hand went to the goldsmith's, and asked for two gold chains for her mistress who was opposite; then going out immediately, without leaving the bandbox, she returned to the linendraper's.

"Madame," she said to her, "my mistress wishes to show the lace to one of her friends."

"As she pleases, we are in no hurry about it."

She then returned to the goldsmith's: "Madame," she said, "will examine the chains, and when I have returned from my errand, I will try and agree with you for a small one for myself."

The servant disappeared; on both sides of the way it was thought that all was right; at last the linendraper was the first who became impatient, and she went over to see her neighbour.

"Well, what do you think of the lace? You can't do better than keep them all."

"Do you think I would take lace for my chains?"

"Did I not send you a bandbox full this morning by your servant?"

"You mean to say that your nurse came to ask for two fashionable chains for you."

"Neighbour you are dreaming most certainly."

"I think you are."

"Nonsense, I did not come to joke, but inquire about the lace."

"I do not joke any more than you do, we are talking about gold chains, and you have two of mine."

On both sides they began to use high words, and the dispute became exceedingly warm, when the goldsmith himself arrived very *à propos* to explain to the ladies that they had been robbed.

CHAPTER LXIX.

LES CAREURS.

Take care of your money—The woman Caron again—The liquor-merchant robbed—The baker of the Rue Martinville—The pretended widows—The priests of Saint Gervais and Saint Medard—The height of wickedness—The gypsies.

INDIVIDUALS, men or women, present themselves in a retail shop of great business: after having purchased several articles, they give in payment a twenty-franc piece, or else another coin whose value considerably exceeds the amount of their purchase. The shopkeeper gives them the change; they remark, whilst examining the money they have received, one or two pieces which are different from the others; and if the opportunity of making such a remark does not occur, they contrive the means of making it by the introduction of a piece of different stamp. Be this as it may, when shewing to the shopkeeper the coin he has given or thinks he has given, they say:—

"Have you any more such pieces as this? if you have, and will agree to my proposal, I will give you a percentage on every one you have, never mind how many."

The old pieces of twenty-four sous, those of twelve, the small crown pieces, the crowns of six livres, either *à la vache* or with the W, are the kind to enable them to make a proposition of this nature: but woe to that shopkeeper who allows himself to be seduced by such a proposition, if, on proceeding to the search for the coveted coin, he allows access to his till to the persons who offer him the profit: he may be assured that they will subtract the cash with so much legerdemain, that he will not be able to detect them. This is what they term prigging *à la care*; and the thieves who prac-

tise this species of robbery have taken the name of *Careurs.*

There are no expedients to which these rogues do not have recourse to dupe the tradesmen: to-day they employ one stratagem, to-morrow they have another; but there is always some exchange in the affair; and thus, whatever be the pretext under which a stranger, man, woman, or child, present themselves with and offer to exchange money, it is prudent to turn a deaf ear, and dangerous to yield to the temptation. How many money-changers, lottery-office keepers, tobacco-dealers, bakers, vintners, grocers, butchers, &c. have been duped by these adroit cheats, who most particularly address themselves to extensive retail dealers!

The *Careurs* are easily known, for as soon as the till is opened to select the money that they pretend to want, they infallibly plunge their hands into the drawer as if to help in the selection, or point out the particular pieces they require. If, by chance, the shopkeeper has occasion to go into his back shop to get the change for the piece of gold tendered in payment, they follow him, and arrange so well, that they contrive to get their fingers into the bag.

Nearly all the *Careurs* are gypsies, Italians, or Jews. The woman Caron, of whom we have heard in the preceding volumes, was a most expert *Careuse.* One day she entered a liquor-shop, kept by the Sieur Carlier, in the market Saint Jacques. Madame Carlier was alone. The woman Caron called for a glass of aniseed, paid with gold, and made her "*plant*" so well, that, after ten minutes conversation, the mistress went into the room to get a bag containing seven hundred and fifty francs. At the end of a quarter of an hour Caron went away, but scarcely had she departed when Madame Carlier, who can attest the fact, as she is still living, counted her money, which she found reduced to half its original amount. The *Careuse* had so completely wheedled her, that in her presence she really saw double. This robbery having been denounced to me,

by the skill displayed I felt convinced I knew the authoress of it, who was apprehended, convicted, and sentenced.

There is not, I believe, any presti-digitator (slight-of-hand-man) in the world who can compete with the famous *Duchess* mentioned in these Memoirs *. One day, whilst a baker's wife, in the Rue Martinville, at Rouen, was examining a sum of two thousand francs which she was carrying in her apron, she took from her nearly half. The baker's wife, feeling that her load was so much lighter, found that she was robbed, and was going to have the *Duchess* apprehended; but she would not give her the chance of doing so, saying to her:—

"Look, ma'am; count your money."

The baker's rib counted, and found it right to penny.

The male and female purloiners *à la care* are also very expert in effecting a substitution of one article for another. A jeweller shows a gold ornament or precious stone; they purchase a trifle, and leave crystal or paste in lieu of some valuable trinket or gem.

The woman Caron, the Duchess, and another gypsey called *la Gaspard*, had devised a singular means of robbing priests. Clothed in mourning, (to imitate, as much as possible, the widows of a rich farmer,) they went to church, and endeavoured to draw into conversation the letter-out of chairs or the candle-lighter. They know that these inferior persons like to gossip. The pretended widows questioned them on the subject of the pecuniary situation of each of the ecclesiastics of the parish, and as soon as one of them seemed worth "powder and shot" (*valoir le coup de fusil*, that was their expression,) to obtain access to them, they desired them to say masses, or else, poor frightened souls, they submitted to them some case of conscience, and testified a desire to accomplish good works. It was their intention to give alms, and they besought the priest to point out to them the unhappy and indigent whom they

* Vol. i. p. 59 &c. and vol. iii. p. 184.

could solace in their misery. The priest did not fail to tell them of several poor wretches who were in deep distress, and fitting objects of their bounty; and they instantly hastened to visit the necessitous paupers mentioned to them, either giving them money or clothing.

"It is to the recommendation of M. Such-an-one," they told them, "that you are indebted for the interest we take in your unfortunate situation."

These indigent parishioners ran to thank M. Such-an-one, who was enchanted at his penitents. He was their ghostly adviser and spiritual director; he knew their inmost hearts, they were all virtue; he would have administered the sacrament to them without confession. But once thus established, this confidence which he had in the pious relicts cost him dear. One morning, or one evening, the time of day is not of much moment, the ecclesiastic was completely plundered, and the pious women disappeared, and were seen no more.

They robbed in this way a priest of St. Gervais, whose watch, purse of gold, and other valuables they took; and a priest of St. Medard was in a similar manner laid under contributions by these gypsies. When they had thus reduced the servant of God to a nakedness perfectly apostolic, they put the copestone on their wickedness, by robbing the unfortunate creatures whom they had assisted. They went to their house, inquired into their wants, made them open the cupboards, drawers, examined every article in their wardrobe, under pretence of seeing what they most needed, and if, during the operation, they saw a watch, buckles, chain, or anything of value, they secreted it, and then manifesting a desire to go away, "It is well, my children," said mother Caron; "I know what you want better than yourselves;" and at the same moment she went out, taking care, to prevent an immediate discovery, to make them accompany her to the bottom of the staircase. The people whom these wretches plundered with such atrocity were usually poor creatures, who, even in the depths of the greatest distress, have

preserved still some relics of former days and original ease.

Whilst I was at the police, more than sixty complaints, in which were described such acts, were denounced against the woman Caron or her daughter. At length I contrived to arrest these abominable creatures, who are still in prison. The gypsies do not confine themselves to these means of appropriating to themselves the property of another: they frequently commit murder, and they have the less objection to commit a murder, because they have no feeling of any kind of remorse; and they have a peculiar kind of expiation whereby they purify themselves. For a year they wear a coarse woollen shirt, and abstain from "*work*" (robbing). This period elapsed, they believe themselves as white as snow. In France, the majority of the persons of this caste call themselves Catholics, and have every external show of great devotion. They always carry about them rosaries and a crucifix; they say their prayers night and morning, and follow the service with much attention and precision. In Germany, they seldom exercise any other calling than that of horse doctor, or herbalist: some addict themselves to medicine, that is to say, profess to be in possession of secret means of effecting cures. A vast number of them travel in bodies, some tell fortunes, others mend glass, china, pots, and pans; woe to the inhabitants of the country overrun by these vagabonds! There will infallibly be a mortality amongst the cattle, for the gypsies are very clever in killing them, without leaving any traces which can be converted into a charge of malevolence against them. They kill the cows by piercing them to the heart with a long and very fine needle, so that the blood flowing inwardly, it may be supposed that the animal died of disease. They stifle poultry with brimstone; they know that then they will give them the dead birds; and whilst they imagine that they have a taste for carrion, they make good cheer, and eat delicious meat. Sometimes they want hams, and then

they take a red herring and hold it under the nose of a pig, which, allured by the smell, would follow them to the world's end.

I shall not expatiate more fully on the manners of the gypsies, confining myself to referring the curious reader, to make the most ample acquaintance with these wanderers, to the interesting history published in Germany by the learned Grellmann,* in which they will find an exact account of this people, the individuals of whose species have been introduced with so little truth by the first romance writer of our time.

* *Histoire des Bohémiens;* or, Picture of the Manners, Usages, and Customs, of this wandering Tribe; with historical researches on their Origin, Language, and first appearance in Europe. By H. M. G. Grellmann. Translated from the German. Second Edition in 8vo. Paris: Chaumont, Bookseller, Palais Royal.

CHAPTER LXX.

LES ROULETIERS.

The obedient driver—The bold robber—The diadem of the Queen of Naples—The diamonds and the ball in the Rue Frépillon—The preservatives.

The *Rouletiers* are those who plunder portmanteaus, imperials, and other property from carriages, on which they are placed. The majority of rouletiers are of the working class, and usually dressed as porters, messengers, or waggoners. At one time they existed in considerable numbers, and had their stations in various parts of the city, where the arrival of coaches, carriages, &c. were most frequent, and afforded the best facility for the prosecution of their designs. The Rue d'Enfer, the Fauxbourgs Saint-Honore, Saint-Martin, Saint-Denis, the Boulevards, the Place Louis XV., the Rues des Bourdonnais and des Lavandieres, the Rues Tire-Chappe and Montorgueil, were incessantly infested by Rouletiers.

When robbers of this class had cast their eyes on an errand cart or other vehicle containing luggage, they followed them, and at the first halt accomplished their design, and but few carriages are used which have not paid something like a contribution to them. The first who excelled in this department, were *Fanfan Maison*, the brothers *Servier*, *Jean*, *Goupi*, *Herriez*, *Cadet*, *Nisel*, *Dubois l'Insolent*, *Roblot*, *Lafrance*, *Ligny*, *Dore*, &c. all men as daring as expert. Postchaises, berlins, taxed carts, diligences, no sort of vehicle came amiss to them, and they plundered with incredible audacity. One of the gang accosted the waggoner, and detained him at the head of his horses, whilst the others opened the waggon and took out the bales, boxes, &c.

I have been told, that the brothers Servier, and two

other rouletiers, being at nightfall on the Champs Elysées, the elder, having entered into conversation with a coachman, endeavoured to distract his attention whilst his comrades were at work. Suddenly the driver, perceiving by a motion at the back part of the coach that his vehicle was weighed down by some persons behind, wanted to see what occasioned this movement; "I command you not to look back," said Servier to him, and the charioteer obeyed.

I have been assured, that very frequently it has occurred that Goupi has got on a coach in the market-place, and taken down trunks as if belonging to himself.

One day I followed a famous *rouletier* named *Gosnet*. On reaching the Rue Saint Denis, he jumped up on a coach, put on a cloak and cotton cap which he found lying close to his hand, and in this dress got down again with a portmanteau under his arm. It was not later than two o'clock in the afternoon; but to elude all suspicion, Gosnet, on alighting, went straight to the *conducteur* (guard), and after having spoken to him, turned down a street close at hand. I was in waiting for him, he was apprehended and sentenced.

The *rouletiers* are not the best informed people in the world, and thus sometimes in their expeditions they carry off booty of considerable value, but the worth of which they are completely ignorant of. One of them, whom the robbery of a trunk belonging to the Queen of Naples had made possessor of a diadem, made a present of it to a common girl with whom he lived, wishing to spare himself the expense of an ornamental comb which he had long promised her. For want of a better, she condescended to wear the royal ornament, and appeared decked with it at a ball in the Rue Frépillon in the Cour St. Martin. It was no doubt the first time that diamonds had ever been seen there.

Would you set all the rouletiers at defiance? Do not fasten on your travelling trunks, nor your imperials,

either with leather straps or cords, but with iron chains which cannot be forced without communicating with a bell concealed in a secret place which will give the alarm. This piece of advice is for travellers, and not for waggoners. They must have good dogs, the fiercer the better; and these guardians should be kept within the conveyance, and not underneath it. Let carters never go alone when they can do otherwise; let them abstain from the bad habit of going into all the alehouses on the road. The offer of a glass of beer, wine, and spirits by a stranger is frequently only a trap to catch flats. They are thieves who regale the unsuspecting carter.

Washerwomen will do well to have their carts watched by a grown up person, and not by children who fall asleep, or whose attention is very easily distracted from their charge. They show them a cockchafer, and the cockchafer and the thief fly * away at the same time.

Messengers who are returning, should never put their money in bags placed one on the other, as is the usual custom; on the contrary, it is necessary that they should have it constantly in view; if not, whilst they are walking on foot, they may search, find, and make off with the cash. Thieves have had the perseverance to go many leagues in a light cart, following some object, and awaiting a propitious moment to effect their purpose, and decamp.

* *Voler* is to "rob" and "fly away" also.—The pun is lost in the translation.—Tr.

CHAPTER LXXI.

LES TIREURS.

The owner of the learned ass—The Englishman at the parade—The *Nonnes*—Eyes at the fingers' ends—*Chicane*—The daring pickpocket—The fog and the repeater—The man of *business*—Efficacy of the punishment of death.

The *Tireurs* first had the name of *floueurs*, under which title we shall class another sort of rogues, to whom it does not, however, so appropriately appertain; for in the beginning, *floueurs* signified the persons who seek the *floue*, that is, a large assemblage of persons, a crowd.

The *tireurs*, or *voleurs à la tire* (anglice pickpockets), are those who abstract from people's pockets, purses, money, watches, snuff boxes, &c. &c. They are generally well covered, and have neither canes, nor gloves; for not only do they require the liberty and free exercise of their hands, but also the finest delicacy of touch.

These gentlemen, of whom it would be unjust to say that they do not work with their ten fingers, generally carry on their trade three or four together. It is in crowds that they effect their designs, and therefore they frequent meetings, fêtes, balls, concerts, theatres, at the time of going in, and also at the termination. Their station is that where canes, coats, and umbrellas are left, because the throng is always at that spot. They attend churches also, but only at those times and seasons when some solemn ceremony attracts a large concourse of the faithful. They are on the look out for all rows and disturbances, and frequently begin, and always encourage them, either by pretended insult, or some other equally ingenious mode. There are *tireurs* who are accomplices with showmen. The

proprietor of the learned ass, which must be remembered by all Paris, was the father of a gang of pickpockets; when the ass began his tricks, the tireurs did not put their hands in their own pockets.

Ballad-singers, mountebanks, out-door conjurers, have nearly all alliances with these cut-purses, and participate in the profits of the spoil. In Paris there is not the smallest congregation of persons, or the most trifling disturbance, but the pickpockets throng there. These gentlemen are everywhere.

One day, whilst, with his hands in his pocket, an Englishman was observing the soldiers exercising on the parade, a little pickpocket named *Duluc* cut his watch riband. A minute afterwards the gentleman discovered that he had lost something, looked on the ground, then examined the watch riband, and although it was easy to perceive that he had been deprived of his seals, he searched his pockets and felt all about him from head to foot; at length, astonished at not finding what he had lost, he exclaimed, "*Goddem*, the devil has carried off my seals;" and whilst, from a carelessness of manner, he laughed as loud as his neighbours; the thief, with some of his comrades and accomplices, stood a few paces from him, imitating and mocking him.

Nothing is more easy to detect than a pickpocket; he never stands for a moment in any one place, he must be perpetually on the move, always coming and going. This mobility is necessary for him, because it increases his opportunities of looking persons in the face, and also to assure himself whether or no there is any booty. When a pickpocket approaches a crowd, he swings his hands about as if by chance, but contrives to strike them against the pocket or fob, that he may ascertain if they contain anything. If he thinks that it is worth the trouble of his emptying it, the two accomplices, whom the *prig* calls his *nonnes* or *nonneurs*, each take their post, that is to say as near as possible to the person who is to be *drawn*. They press and squeeze against him as if he were in a vice, whilst

endeavouring to conceal the hand of the operator. A watch or a purse may be the result of the attempt, and if so, it is instantly passed into the hands of an accomplice, the *coqueur*, who makes off with the booty as quickly as possible, carefully avoiding any appearance of hurry or anxiety.

One remark is very essential to make, namely, that at the end of any spectacle, after church, or at the termination of any meeting that has drawn together a large assemblage of persons, pickpockets seem desirous of returning against the stream of the crowd which is going out. Readers, you are warned; when you see one or more individuals attempting such a manœuvre, looking up in the air and pushing hard, be on your guard. It is neither on the safety-chain, nor the button of your fob that your dependence can or should be placed; they present no obstacles. Thieves are, on the contrary, quite contented that precautions of this kind should be adopted: they are the security of the citizen, he has a chain, his fob is thereby protected, he fears nothing, he does not think of attending to the safety of his watch, that would be a superfluous care; what can happen to it? The chain is cut, the button twisted off, and the watch disappears. Pickpockets have not the appearance even of touching it, but they have eyes at their fingers' ends.

However, there is a mode of setting at defiance all their art and subtlety; turn, that is to say, twist your watch fob; one or two turns are enough, and then you may set at naught the arts of the most *downy drawer*, however skilled in *abstracts*, and the talent of appropriating to himself the purse, watch, or snuff-box of another.

There was in Paris a thief of such incredible dexterity that he robbed without an accomplice. He placed himself in front of a person, put his hand behind him, and took either a watch or some other valuable. This species of thievery is called the vol *à la chicane*.

A fellow named Molin, alias *Moulin le Chapelier*,

being under the portico des Français * was desirous of stealing a gentleman's purse: the sufferer, who was near the wall, thought he felt some one picking his pocket; Molin, full of presence of mind, effected his object in an instant, the purse was torn from the pocket, he opened it, and taking out a coin, asked for a ticket for the play. At the same moment the person robbed said to him,—

"But, Sir, you have taken my purse, give it to me."

"The devil I have," replied Molin with an air of affected surprise, "are you quite sure?" Then looking attentively at it, "By heavens! I thought it was mine. Oh! sir, I ask your pardon."

At the same time he returned the purse, and all the bystanders were persuaded that he had done it involuntarily. This is being *fly*, or I know nothing about it.

At the time of the great fog, Molin and a *pal* named Dorlé were stationed at the environs of the Place des Italiens. An old gentleman passed, and Dorlé stole his watch which he passed to Molin. The darkness was so great that he could not discern if it were a repeater or not, and to ascertain this, Molin pressed down the spring: the hammer instantly struck on the bell, and by the sound the old man knew his watch, and instantly cried out,—

"My watch! my watch! pray restore me my watch, it belonged to my grandfather, and is a family piece."

Whilst uttering these lamentations, he endeavoured to go in the direction whence the sound had proceeded, to get his watch again as he expected and hoped to do. He came close up to Molin, who, under cover of the dense fog, put his hand with the watch in it close to the old gentleman's ear, and pushing the spring again, said, whilst the watch was striking—

"Listen then to its sounds for the last time;" and with this cruel advice the two thieves then went away, leaving the worthy undone elderly to bewail his loss.

* A theatre at Paris.—Tr.

The ancient *voleurs à la tire* cite still, as amongst the celebrated personages of their profession, two Italians, the brothers *Verdure*, the eldest of whom, convicted of forming one of a band of chauffeurs, was sentenced to death. On the day of execution, the younger, who was at liberty, wished to see his brother as he left the prison, and with several of his comrades took his station on the road. When thieves go out in the evening into a crowd they generally have a preconcerted word of alarm or summons, by which to call or distinguish their accomplices. Young *Verdure*, on seeing the fatal car, uttered his, which was *lorge*, to which the criminal, looking about him, replied *lorge*. This singular salute given and returned, it may be imagined that young *Verdure* retired. On his road he had already stolen two watches; he saw his brother's head fall from the block, and either before or afterwards he was determined to carry matters to their utmost.

The crowd having dispersed, he returned to the cabaret with his comrades. "Well, well," said he, laying down on the table four watches and a purse, "I think I have not played my cards amiss. I never thought to have made such a haul at my *frater's* death; I am only sorry he's not here to have his share of the *swag*."

What will the advocates for the punishment of death say to this? That it is efficacious, salutary? This is a powerful proof, certainly.

CHAPTER LXXII.

LES FLOUEURS*.

The money-finders—A good bottle of wine—The Saint-Jean—*Le verre en fleurs*—The money-balance and *la triomphe*.

THE *floueurs*, who should rather be termed the *joueurs*, go generally two or three together. One of them goes first, holding in his hand a twenty or forty-sous piece; and when he sees a man whose appearance bespeaks him a stranger—the cut of whose clothes, boots, and hat, the mode of whose hair, a complexion more or less hale, a gaping and inquisitive look, are the indices by which a "*yokel*" is easily distinguished; when, I say, a *floueur*, who is in advance, perceives these marks of rusticity, he lets the piece of money fall cleverly from his hand, and then stooping, picks it up in a way that the passenger must observe.

"Sir," says the rascal, on rising up, "has this piece of money fallen accidentally from your pocket?"

"No, Sir," is the reply of the stranger.

"Really, Sir, if it were worth more," the swindler says, "I would offer you the half; but for such a trifle it is not worth while; if you will allow me, I will offer you a bottle of wine."

If the stranger accepts the proposal, the thief puts his hand on his cravat, or else takes off his hat as if he were saluting some person. At this signal, which is called the *Saint Jean*, the accomplices precede him, and running forward, instal themselves in a cabaret, where they begin playing at cards.

An instant afterwards, the individual who is supposed to have found the piece arrives, with the stranger

* Anglice, ring-droppers.—TR.

whom they propose to dupe; they both sit down; but the stranger is always so placed that he can perceive the cards of one of the players; an arranged manœuvre which attracts attention: the "*flat*" has seen it, or is directed to it by his *friend*, who tells him how badly the cards were played. Bets are laid on both sides; the stranger is induced to take a part, which they let him do, and he is sure of winning his money. He takes the cards himself, and having put his cash into the hands of the man he entered with, which is very natural, because he is on the same side with himself, he plays; but, by an incredible fatality, he loses, and then the sharpers, laughing, drink at the expense of the *suive* (flat), that is the name they give their prey. The trick on the cards by which these gentlemen conciliate fortune and ensure success, they call the *verre en fleure*.

A simpleton who was noodled into going into one of these cabarets, on the "*dropping rig*," saw the trick.

"Sacredieu!" he cried, "if I were allowed to bet, I would lay twenty sous that I would make the point!"

The bet was taken; but before he began to play, the *suive* cried out—

"One moment, gentlemen, if you please! short reckonings make long friends;" and drawing from his pocket a money-balance, "I wish," he added, "to see if your louis are full weight; I will answer for mine; besides, as you will not win them, that must be indifferent to you."

He weighed the louis, which were deficient thirteen grains in all. He asked for three francs to be added; and when the sum was made up, he played, lost, and remained perfectly stupified. The game was *la triomphe*, and he had king, queen, nine of trumps, and two other kings.

If we would not be duped we should not have a money-balance, and not be induced to go and drink

with strangers, and most decidedly not to play with them.

It is not, perhaps, inopportune to advise strangers, on their arrival at Paris, to clad themselves afresh from head to foot; it is the only mode of not becoming a point of attack to all sharpers. They should go to the sign of the *Ciseau volant*, and give orders to tailor, boot-maker, hatter, &c. &c.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

LES EMPORTEURS.

The gentlemen who lose themselves—The curiosities of Paris—The two cradles—The officious *Cicerone*—The member of the university and the rattle-snake.

There are in Paris individuals whom we see from morning till evening in the public way; they have no determined object, but yet are continually promenading up and down the principal streets. They may also be frequently met in public places and at meetings of all sorts; such as the Tuileries, the Palais Royal, the Jardin des Plantes, that of the Luxembourg, the Louvre, the Carousel, or the Place Vendôme, at the time of parade, the galleries of the Musée, and, in fact, everywhere that there are a great number of strangers and country people.

The sharpers I allude to are always clothed, if not elegantly, yet very neatly. They might be taken for merchants, or at least for men of business. These worthies hunt in leashes; one of them goes on first, and on perceiving a stranger, (and with a little tact a stranger may be known at one glimpse,) he accosts him, inquiring very politely for some street which he knows to be in the immediate vicinity of the place in which he is.

The stranger of course replies, that he is not a resident in Paris; then the swindler, taking the ball at the bound, says—

"Nor am I; it is, in fact, so very long since I was in the capital, that I am completely lost in the midst of the manifold changes that have been made here."

On reaching the corner of the street, the "lost gentleman" reads the inscription, and cries out, "Oh, this is the street; I remember now."

Whilst walking on beside the stranger, he enters into conversation; and leading the subject to what is most curious at the moment in the way of sights, talks sometimes of the wardrobe, sometimes of the king's apartments; at another period the theme is pictures, or some interesting exhibition; at one time it was the coronation costume of Napoleon, at another the cradle of the King of Rome; subsequently that of the Duc de Bordeaux; again, the stage, the giraffe, the Algerine ambassador, or perchance the Chinese. In fact, whatever the bait may be, the sharper is going to procure a ticket for two persons, and not having any friend with him, he makes an offer to the stranger to accompany him.

It is either an officer of the guards, or a person of the Château, or some personage of consideration or rank, who has promised this ticket; he is to meet him in a coffee-house close at hand, as appointed; and he requests the stranger to go with him. Should consent be given, a preconcerted signal is forthwith made to the two accomplices, who formed the rear-guard, to go forward. The coffee-house is not very distant; the stranger and his companion speedily arrive there; the latter goes to the bar, as if to inquire of the person whom he expected had arrived, and when he has done this, he invites the stranger to go up stairs into the billiard-room; he soon follows, and says that his friend will very shortly arrive.

"In the mean time," he adds, "let me offer you a small glass of something."

The small glass is accepted, and they continue looking at the billiard players.

One of the players makes a fine stroke, which the *Cicerone* points out to the stranger, the game goes on, and chance strokes are made every moment. The player who ought to win loses the game; he does not care a rush, he says; he would as soon lose as win; his uncle's estates will pay for all; besides, although he has lost some, there are others left behind quite as good,

and, so saying, he chinks the crowns in his pocket. A singular stroke presents itself, he induces the stranger to bet with him, and if he has the weakness to be tempted, farewell to his money.

The stranger is not always content with betting; sometimes taking a cue, he offers to play the one who looks like a booby; he piques himself on winning, and the more he does so, the surer is he of being plucked. The pretended bad player makes so many chance strokes, that he comes off conqueror at last. I know persons who, in this way, have lost from three to four thousand francs.

A member of the imperial university, M. Salvage de Faverolle, an old gentleman nearly eighty years of age, lost at it his two watches, a gold chain, a hundred double napoleons, and besides these a sum of six hundred francs, for which he gave a bill of exchange. He did not play, but, by way of intimidating him, they made him believe that he had betted. His *Cicerone*, ere he had recognized him as being an old doctor, and amateur of natural history, had proposed to him to go and assist at some experiments about to be undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining the nature and effects of the poison of the rattle-snake.

"Well, the serpent, when shall we see it?" repeated M. Salvage, incessantly. "Oh, it will not be long first," replied the Cicerone; "I am no less impatient than yourself to hear the rattles,"—and by the "*rattles*," he meant the rattle of the old gentleman's money.

The sharpers who thus fleeced him, have received the name of *emporteurs au billard*. On my accession to the police, the number of this class of rogues amounted to twenty-eight or thirty, they are now reduced to four-fifths of that number, and I may safely say, that the reduction was effected by myself. Those who now carry on the system are not rich, the others are dispersed, after detention longer or shorter in proportion to the nature of their offence. Before my time the *emporteurs au billard* were only punished administratively, that is

to say, arbitrarily. They were sent for a few months to Bicêtre, and on their quitting that prison, they were conducted by the gendarmerie to their own department. I was the first who quoted against these swindlers the use of the 405th article of the code. I was thought to be correct, and all those taken in the act were sentenced to three years' confinement. This severity, united to the divulging of their mode of proceeding, has powerfully contributed to purge the capital of them. The five or six *emporteurs*, who are still in Paris, may be compelled to abandon this sort of existence, as soon as it shall please the authorities—Why does it not please them at once? "Furthermore deponent sayeth not."

CHAPTER LXXIV.

LES EMPRUNTEURS.

Travelling post—Portmanteau given in charge—The exordium—The aristocrats—The ingots—Splendid operation—What embarrasses, harasses—The deposit—The little soldier, and the madman of Cette—Brilliants and sapphires—M. Fromager—The twin sisters.

Borrowing, in a way that partakes of swindling and robbery, is one of the most ingenious modes of appropriating to one's self the goods of another. Never did the *emprunteurs* make so much booty, as during the troubles of the Revolution, it was the season of their propitious industry, which they exercised in the following manner.

Two men of mature age travelled post, taking with them a third individual, who passed for their servant. These gentlemen had all the external appearance of opulence, elegant and gentlemanly look, polite manners, appropriate language, and the demeanour of noblemen. It was impossible not to believe them to be personages of consequence, and, moreover, persons of wealth, to judge by the way in which they lived. They only alighted at the first rate inns, or best lodging-houses; what most imported them was, that the landlord should be one of the reputed rich men of the country, and thus they always knew before hand the situation of his finances, and if he had not much ready money, they could at least build their hopes and form their plans on his credit. Under these considerations, the post-masters suited them to a turn.

Arrived at the place they had pitched upon, the two travellers ordered the best room; and whilst the house resounded with the orders given by these high and mighty dons, the pretended servant was employed in unloading the carriage and carrying his master's lug-

gage into the house. This operation was seldom effected but in presence of all the servants of the hotel: master, mistress, servants, stable-boy, cook, and even scullions, all are glad on such an occasion to have a look; all have a tolerable sprinkling of curiosity, and these spectators aiding in the unpacking and unloading do not allow a single opportunity to escape them, by which they can obtain favourable or unfavourable conjectures of the new comers.

They assist to carry in the trunks that they may ascertain their weight; they would not be sorry to lend a hand at the opening, and every portmanteau which they are forbidden not to touch, is for them a subject of mortal curiosity and inquietude; they measure and weigh it with their eyes, and if it should seem heavy, or is it removed with any appearance of mystery, then is there a wide field open to conjecture. The new comers are wealthy as Crœsus, and have treasures in their train. Confidence of a boundless nature, complaisance, little attention, all is bestowed on them: for them, they would one and all cut themselves into quarters. Cellar, kitchen, stable, and the whole house is revolutionized.

The travellers, whose habits I am about to describe, were not ignorant of how much importance and consideration might be a portmanteau, well secured and fastened. Their servant, who was the practical man in the business, and aided materially in forwarding their plans, pulls out with much difficulty from the boot or imperial, a sort of chest, whose size contrasted greatly with his efforts to lift it out.

"By Gemini! it does not contain feathers," say the gazers.

"I believe you," replies the servant; then turning to the host, hostess, or some one of the family, he stretches out his neck, adding, in a confidential tone, but so as to be clearly understood by every body, "It is the cash!"

"Let me help you, let me help you," repeat five or six officious persons.

"Wait till they help you," says the landlord, coming forward to take a survey of the burden, and when the box is placed on the ground, they proceed to examine the fastenings, the workmanship of which they greatly admire.

Each makes his own reflections, but the most interesting to come at is that of the master; the servant of the gentleman has eyes and ears for everything, and if, at this period, when assignats alone constituted the public fortune, if the landlord allowed to escape him a gesture, a remark, a look, which betokened his love of specie, that look, remark, or gesture was the gauge by which they measured the extent to which they might tempt him.

If there were any chances of success, the travellers espied the propitious moment for the attack. One evening, when they were sure they had only kindness to expect, they begged the landlord or his wife, or both, to come into their apartment, and they attended the invitation with the utmost promptitude. Then one of the strangers said to the servant, "Comtois, leave us for a time," and as soon as he had retired the other stranger commenced the business.

"We live in a time when probity is so rare, that we ought really to esteem ourselves but too happy to meet with honest people. In coming to your house we have been extremely fortunate, and deem ourselves so. The reputation which you deservedly enjoy is to us a guarantee that we run no risk in confiding to you a secret which is to us of paramount importance. You know with how much ferocity the nobility are pursued; every man of rank or name is proscribed. We have also been compelled to fly our country to escape from the fury of the Revolutionists; they sought, and still seek, our lives and fortunes, and we have escaped with difficulty, and well for us that we have, or else, as matters now are, it would have been all over with us. At last, God be praised! we are, for a time, in safety, and with honest people."

This was the preamble, or exordium. After having stated it with all the solemnity of misfortune, the traveller made a pause, in the expectation that one of those questions would be asked which evince the degree of interest which the interrogator takes in your situation. If this was satisfactory, he resumed :—

"You are not ignorant that cash and sterling money have disappeared from circulation, and that whosoever has any, conceals it with the greatest care, for fear of being apprehended and treated like an aristocrat. We possess a quantity of specie, as much as fifty thousand francs. Such a sum is embarrassing, and, the more easily to conceal it from inquiry, we have melted it ourselves, and made it into ingots. At this epoch we did not foresee that we should be compelled to exile ourselves instantly, so that at the moment of a precipitous departure we find ourselves almost without money. Up to this period a few louis from a reserve we made, has been sufficient for us, but we have not reached the termination of our journey by a great deal, and who knows how long a time may elapse during our absence! In this situation friends are indispensable to us, and ready money, for we cannot pay postboys with ingots. We could address ourselves to a goldsmith, but who will undertake to say that he will not denounce us? This fear has determined us on applying to you; you can serve us so far as to lend us on one or two ingots a sum of five or six thousand francs."

It must here be noticed, that the sum asked for was always one that squared with the pecuniary means of the landlord.

"It is not necessary to say that in paying you back your capital, we will also add the interest. That is a matter of course. As to the period of this reimbursement, you shall fix it at your own convenience, and the time elapsed, if you want to make use of the ingots, do so without scruple or hesitation. We will give you a written authority, which shall entitle and empower you to act in this respect with full and perfect liberty."

This home thrust being made, the innkeeper was still in a state of uncertainty as to the reply he should give, but soon the ingots taken from the small coffer were extended before his eyes. The lightest of them at least was of the value of the sum required as the loan, and instead of one they offered two. The guarantee was double the loan, money could not be put out with greater security, and then the chance of appropriating the pledge in case of non-payment was not a slight argument and consideration. It was not, then, extraordinary that the landlord should consent to do that which held out such tempting and brilliant advantages. However, it might happen that he refused, and then, as they had no doubt of his good will, they begged him to find in the vicinity some rich man who would loosen his purse-strings, for, rather than have recourse to a goldsmith, they were determined to make any sacrifices.

This was a delicate hint that they were content to pay excessively usurious interest, and the innkeeper soon found amongst his friends some obliging capitalist. The bargain was concluded, but before they took their money, the travellers, still adhering to their system of delicacy, requested that the standard of the gold might be verified.

"It is," said they to the lender, "as much for you as for ourselves; as we have melted louis, ducats, sequins, quadruples, and, in fact, all species of gold coin, we should be very glad, for your security as well as our own, to know what the metal really is."

The lender frequently was desirous of confiding entirely in the honour of the gentlemen, but they insisted on the assay. But how to contrive it without awaking the suspicion of the goldsmith to whom they should apply, was a matter of question. Each person gave his advice, but to all that was proposed there was some objection or difficulty raised. The sagacity of the assembly was nearly at a dead stand-still, when suddenly one of the sharpers became inspired; "Oh, *parbleu*," he cried, "we are at the ass's bridge; nothing

can be more easily accomplished without in any way putting the jeweller in our confidence; let us file one of the ingots, the first that comes, and we will have the filings assayed.

This expedient was deemed excellent by the unanimous voice of the assembly, and the lender immediately began to file the ingot, the precious grains of which were collected in a paper left purposely on the table. The operation done, the *emprunteurs* wrapped up the filings. This was the decisive moment; they made up the packet, but during these movements, for the paper into which had fallen only brass filings, they substituted another exactly similar, which contained the filings of gold of twenty-two carats. This the lender took to the goldsmith's to have it assayed, and returned speedily with a smiling countenance, and rubbing his hands like a man satisfied with his day's work.

"Gentlemen," said he, on entering, "it is standard of the best quality, and therefore the business is done: I will give you the cash you require, and you will have the kindness to give me the ingots."

"Of course; but as in this world we do not know who may die or who may live, to avoid all dispute, we think it will be most fitting to shut them up in this box, (a box is always at hand,) on which both parties shall place their seal, and then this will be more convenient for us, in case we should not claim it ourselves; in exchange for a small acknowledgment, which you will be so kind as to give us, you will give the box to any person we may send for it; all is settled, and the party fetching it will know nothing of the contents."

The acknowledgment was thus expressed:—

"I declare that I have in my possession a box which I will return on the presenting of this note to the person who will pay me the sum of ————."

This corroborated the so essential precaution of placing on the seals which was to be the guarantee that they would not examine the ingots. Thus the sharpers had time to reach another part of the country,

when under the favour of incognito, they began their manœuvres, which they varied according to place and circumstance.

The industry of the *emprunteurs* did not perish with the assignats; only to attain the same ends, new modes have been devised and put into execution. We shall have proof of this in the following fact.

Two robbers of this class, FRANCOIS MOTELET, alias *le Petit Soldat* (the little soldier) and an Italian, FELICE CAROLINA, alias the *Fou de Cette*, had had made, for the sum of thirty-five thousand francs, an ornament of brilliants and sapphires. With this and an invoice they went to Brussels, where they knew an old goldsmith retired from business, the Sieur TIMBERMAN, who was said to lend money on pledges. They went to find him at his house in the Rue des Sablons, and asked the loan of twenty thousand francs on the ornament. Timberman looked attentively at the gems, and when he had ascertained the value, he declared he would not lend more than eighteen thousand francs upon it. This the *emprunteurs* accepted, and the pledge was immediately put in a box, on which each placed his seal. The eighteen thousand francs were counted out; deduction of interest was made before hand by way of certainty, and the *Petit Soldat* and the Italian returned to Paris. Two months afterwards they took a second journey to Brussels, The period fixed for the redemption of the jewels having arrived, they did so punctually, and Timberman was delighted with their exactitude, so much so, that on returning the ornament, which he did with regret, he offered them any service that was in his power to perform. These offers were well received, and they promised him that, should they again need a loan upon security, he should have the preference. But we shall see that in making this promise, the gentlemen *emprunteurs* had resolved not to address any other person but him, although, according to custom, he had made them pay pretty well for the money lent.

In Paris there is a jeweller who, for forty years, has the exclusive privilege of furnishing jewels to the kings, queens, princes, and princesses, who have sparkled on the different theatres of Europe. In all parts of his shop shine most splendidly the diamond, the emerald, the sapphire, the ruby. Golconda includes less treasure, but it is all pure illusion; in the magic of their splendour they want the ideal of real value, and all these hues, so rich in the enchantments of colour, are but the sterile productions of deceitful reflexion: but no matter, at first sight nothing so much resembles truth as a lie, and the proprietor of these wonders, M. Fromager, was so skilful in his imitations, that unless a person be a real connoisseur, he will be deceived, and take the false composition for a veritable gem. The Italian and the Petit Soldat had no sooner been the possessors of the ornament worth thirty-five thousand francs, than just appreciators of the talent of M. Fromager, they went to his warehouse, and ordered a duplicate. With the model before him the imitative jeweller went to work, and executed a perfect chef-d'œuvre: on confronting the two ornaments it was impossible not to take them for two sisters; it was not simply the air of a family that he had given to it, you would have declared that they were twin sisters, in fact they were made for either of them to play the part of Sosia, even in the presence of a lapidary who did not examine too closely.

The Petit Soldat and his friend the Italian were not sorry to know that even M. Timberman might be mistaken. They set out again for Brussels, and again pawned the elder sister for the same sum. Ten days afterwards the Petit Soldat presented himself to the usurer, and telling him that he came to redeem his jewels, counted out the money to him, and the box containing the gem was placed in his hands. After having broken the strings and seals, he opened it, as if to assure himself of the identity of the pledge: but whilst the jew was trying if the money were good, for the box which

contained the elder sister he substituted one precisely similar containing the younger sister, and placed it on the desk, whilst he secretly and quickly slid the other into a side pocket, in the lining of an ample cloak.

The Petit Soldat was about to return, and had already began to take leave of M. Timberman, when the Italian entered with alarm in his face, and, accosting his friend, said—"Ah, my dear fellow, what bad news I have for you! the two drafts which you sent to M. Champon at Ghent, have not been paid, and they require you to take them up instantly: you know they amount to seven thousand francs."

"What an awkward circumstance."

"Ah! my God! there is no way of meeting them but by leaving the jewel in the hands of M. Timberman; we can come for it in a few days."

"Just as you please, my sons," said Timberman; "speak before I open my chest: which I shall keep, the money or the jewels?"

"The jewels," said the Petit Soldat. The box was tied and sealed up, and the two swindlers went away, carrying the eighteen thousand francs.

Some months afterwards, M. Timberman, weary of waiting for the *emprunteurs*, who did not return, broke open the seals of the box. Alas! the brilliants and sapphires had vanished, they were transformed into paste, the gold had been metamorphosed into copper, but the workmanship was admirable.

Jewellers, trinket sellers, diamond dealers, &c., cannot be too much on their guard against the young sister. I know more than four persons who have been robbed nearly in the same way as the usurer at Brussels. Sharpers whose inventions are fertile devise this stratagem to-day, and another to-morrow. One that generally answers their purpose is the following:—They enter a shop to purchase some article of value; the selection is soon made; they pitch on something valuable, and capable of going into a small compass,

and in two words the bargain is concluded. Unfortunately, they have not about them the necessary sum; they will return; but as they wish to complete the purchase, and to make certain that their selection is not changed, they request the chosen article may be put in a box, tied up and sealed with their own seal. The shopkeeper, blinded by the earnest paid down, accedes to the proposition, but forgets to watch his customer's fingers. What is the consequence? They tie up and seal a substituted box, whilst that containing the property descends into the pocket of the sharper, who will return at Easter or Trinity. Trinity passes away! the shopkeeper has the caution-money, and loses ninety per cent. He then remembers, that the day on which he had transacted this superb bit of business was on a Saturday, and that he had not taken handsel during the week.

Since our neighbours on the other side of the water have become enamoured of the climate of our France, it has been incessantly overrun (in every sense) by a multitude of originals, who think to escape the spleen by flying from the banks of the Thames. These *milords*, so loaded with ennui, are hailed at all the inns with pleasure, because they are supposed to be made of guineas. They are whimsical, fantastic, capricious, cross, and difficult to please. Never mind; they do not pretend to perceive it; nay, on the contrary, they are only the more anxious to please, and fly to anticipate their desires; and the more impenetrable, mysterious, and even absurd they are, the more efforts are made to comprehend and please them. The guineas! the guineas!—how they make an innkeeper smile! how many smiles can they extort from all the innkeepers throughout the world!

The reception they give to the roughest looking person when properly announced, must necessarily be remarked by the sharping gentry, who are naturally observers, and know how to reap a harvest from the observations they make. It may not be uninteresting

to the reader to learn how much profit these sharpers, who feed on the credulity of the human race, can realize by a feigned originality of conduct.

Figure to yourself, reader, a gentleman and his French or Italian servant, whom he calls *John*, in that tone at once solemn, brief, harsh, and with that imperiousness of a master who allies to despotic manners a well evinced disgust of life. The gentleman alights from his post-chariot. The rim of his black cap carefully folded down below his ears, he appears suffering and morose, and scarcely condescends to make a sign. He crosses the yard without looking at anything; and in his total carelessness does not even perceive that the long furred cloak in which he is enveloped brushes along the pavement, and that the female servants ranged along the passage are nice looking girls. All is indifferent, uncomfortable, insupportable;—he does not turn back to look, but once, and that is to ascertain whether John follows with the bottle of *soda-water*, and the precious necessary of health, namely the *New London Portative Apothecary* *, without which no man of consequence, unless he would be a self-slaughterer, can go from home even for a distance of four miles. His conduct is already a little singular; but added to his costume, his manners, and a variety of other particulars, he quickly becomes ridiculous; and three hours have not elapsed from the arrival of the

* We copy literally from the literal M. Vidocq, who seems rather at fault, not only in his caricature but his orthography. His knowledge of the English character is about as correct as his acquaintance with the language. John, with a "*new portative apothecary*" under his arm, must indeed be a sight in Paris; we should stare somewhat even in London. M. V. has forgotten to say whether the "portative apothecary" was labelled round the neck with "Before taken to be well shaken," or any other appropriate direction. The "homme comme il faut" described in the text, was doubtless what Theodore Hook calls a "*Buccaneer*," in every sense of the word.—Tr.

gentleman until the whole household consider him as an amusing character.

"Who is your master?" says the landlord to John; "he is a regular Ostrogoth; he is more sad than passion-week, says nothing, and roars like a bull. I have seen many of your Englishmen, but never had one who exacted so much. Why, we are always obliged to be running after him. He wants, and he don't want; he orders, and counter-orders. Is he sick or mad?"

"Do not talk to me of it," says John, who is an egregious chatterer; "my master, such as you see him, is the best man in the world, but you must know how to take him. I have travelled about with him for these four years; before he never could keep a servant with him, but I have contrived to stay, and 'faith I am not sorry for it, now that I know his ways and how to please him."

"Ah, you have travelled with him these four years, eh?—and where the deuce are you now going?"

"Where are we going?—ask him where he is going; why he does not know himself! We go to-day here; to-morrow there. He says he means to settle himself, and we are moving about every day."

"By this account, then, it must cost him a great deal of money?"

"Oh, yes! I would wish no better fortune than the *pour boires* that I have given to the postilions."

"He is rich, then?"

"Rich!—why he does not know his wealth! I do not remember how many thousand pounds sterling he has to spend every day."

"The devil!—you should get him to stay here; the country is delightful; besides, he will meet with admirable company. Then we want for nothing: woods for hunting; if he likes fishing, we have a river full of fish; meadows, fields, vineyards, orchards; the theatre all the year round; we have assembly-rooms, excellent actors, and a most delightful ball very often. M. the

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Maréchal —— has a chateau in the environs; Madame the Comtesse de —— has her's quite near! the Duc de —— generally passes the summer months here; then the Marquis de ——, General ——, Chevalier ——, not mentioning M. the Mayor, and Madame his lady, where there is a *conversazione* twice a-week at least. Oh, there are innumerable amusements! The literary circle, where they discuss and read all the newspapers; the society of agriculture and emulation, which has the honour of including amongst its members the most talented men in the country; most magnificent walks; a vaccine establishment; one of the most beautiful churches in the kingdom; concerts; most splendid winter balls; a Tivoli and serenade in summer; a musical mass all the year round, and on grand fêtes, processions in which no one can be weary with admiring the beauty of our young girls. There's amusement enough, I hope. We have, moreover, most extensive barracks, large enough to contain at least two thousand cavalry; forage of the best quality; brilliant coffee-houses; adorable lemonade makers; and billiards as at Paris. For an amateur, or any one that knows how to handle a cue, I assure you it is not to be despised: we have first-rate crack-players. I forgot to tell you that the officers of the garrison are the most amiable cavaliers that can be met with. During the four years you have travelled, have you met with many towns like this? Let me add, that it is the chief city of the department, and that we have everything within ourselves: a police-office, tribunal of the *première instance*, justice of peace, court of assize, executions; a bishopric, a college, mutual instruction, school of industry, elections, an hospital equalled but by few, capuchins, penitents, jesuits, a fair that lasts fifteen days, and a thousand other amusements of the same kind, which, to detail at length, would be fatiguing to me and tiresome to you."

"The picture you present is very attractive, and if

my master were like other men, I have no doubt but that it would suit him to make some stay here. But you must know that master is perpetually complaining of his health."

"Is that all? our doctors practise on the plan of Broussais, and we have most delicious leeches."

"Delicious leeches! Ah, but the air! it's always the air that my master is talking about."

"The air is excellent: we never have any persons sick."

"I thought you had an hospital!"

"Yes, for the poor, but else we should never die unless we were killed."

"Your doctors follow the plan of Broussais—the leeches are delicious—the air is excellent. Now, let us talk of the water. Oh! the water! the water! that is my master's deity."

"Well, then, I defy the whole world to produce finer, clearer, purer."

"And the wine!"

"Exquisite!"

"You have fresh eggs?"

"We have pullets and fowls of our own that lay whenever they are bidden."

"Milk, and butter?"

"To be sure, in abundance, and of the very finest sort."

"Roast-beef, (*ros-biff*) and beef-steak, (*biff-stek*) are they also among the produce of the country?"

"Our oxen are enormous!"

"Really, your country is a little earthly paradise. You inspire me with a desire of remaining here. Ah! if monsieur could partake of my enthusiasm! But we must not think of such a thing. Every thing wearies, every thing fags, every thing annoys him. We have traversed together the four corners of the globe; Europe, Asia, Africa, America. No picturesque situation, no mountain, torrent, lake, abyss, volcano, cascade which we have not visited. Not a horror of nature

which has not had the privilege of attracting us; he arrived, looked, yawned, and said—'*Let us go on to another, John,*' and we went."

After this conversation, John goes to inquire if his master wants him. Instantly rumour, with her hundred tongues, spreads through the hotel that the traveller is a *milord*—that he possesses incalculable riches, but is a most eccentric personage. The host, however, would not be sorry to retain him as his guest: he gives every one their lesson, and the hostess has constantly on her lips a smile, and on her tongue, veneration.

An universal increase of respect and attention is prescribed, and the domestics have orders to have ears and legs only for milord. This order given, John was not slow in descending.

"I think," said he, "that to-morrow we shall take a short walk round the vicinity. My master has desired me to awake him early: he is not so melancholy as usual: if these blue devils would but leave him! but no; it is a spectre that haunts him, and in five minutes, perhaps, he will change his mind: there is no reliance on him."

In the evening milord has for his supper two fresh eggs and a glass of water. Next morning he breakfasts on a glass of water and two fresh eggs. He is sober, and the least eater in the world; but then he is on a regimen. As for John, it is another matter. He eats cuts of mutton, and dispatches bottles of wine in a twinkling.

The repast terminated, they go out for the excursion projected the previous evening, and do not return till after sunset. Milord, wonderful to relate, salutes the hostess; he appears less atrabilarious than in the morning; he utters two other words of compliment with surprising affability: he is a bear commencing his lesson in humanity. Some of the wrinkles are effaced from his brow, the black cap is not pulled so completely over his eyes. Happy effect! incontestable evidence of the salubrious influence of the place on the hypocondriasis

of milord: John cannot make out the cause of such a sudden alteration: but are they not the first indices of an amelioration, which will be attended with still better symptoms?

Milord asks for *ros-biff*, with half-a-dozen French dishes: he tastes of the best binns in the cellar: has rum in his coffee, tea in his rum: rum in his tea: goes to bed and goes to sleep. John is overjoyed: either his master will recover, or will soon die. Devouring the relics of the rich repast, he talks of the miracle that has been wrought, and each and every one, in the hope of keeping a guest like milord, unites in the joy of his servant.

Milord awakes, and has passed a most comfortable night: for a long time he had not tasted so much of the sweets of repose. In the intoxication of the improved state of feeling which he had obtained, he orders the landlord to be summoned to him, and John descends the stairs four at a time.

"Either I am greatly mistaken, or things have taken an entire change: my master is gay as a lark to-day: I never saw him so before. 'John,' said he to me, 'we will not go away from here. Be so kind as to request *monsieur l'auberge* to come up to me as early as possible.' Perhaps milord will instal himself at your house. I can tell you that you would be no loser by him."

"Do you really think so?"

"It would be a fortune for you. I know not what he wants to say to you, but whatever arrangement he may propose, accept; that is, if my advice has any influence with you. The main point is not to contradict him."

"You must know that these Englishmen sometimes have strange ideas——"

"But milord is generous, and whenever he stops any where, I can assure you he makes every one sensible of it."

"Good: I am glad you have given me this intimation: thanks, M. John."

The innkeeper obeys the command of milord with alacrity, and presents himself before him in a most respectful attitude, that is to say, with a smiling countenance, his arms hanging down in front of his breeches, and his head uncovered.

"Milord desired to speak with me?"

"Yes, yes; take a seat (*brancard*,) monsieur l'hôte."

The host does not comprehend, but John arrives: "My master," he says, "invites you to be seated; take a chair."

"Yes, yes, a chair," (*fauteuil*), resumes the illustrious stranger, who then went on to say, "I wish to come to terms with you, and make some arrangement for my residing here with comfort, and to beg you to inform me at once what money will be necessary for me to give you for eating, sleeping, lodging, firing, boarding: I shall have four horses, ten dogs for fox-hunting, four servants besides John, my carriage, and myself*."

* It may be requisite, in order to account for the crassitude of the host's comprehension, to give milord's speech entire, from the original, as a specimen of the English mode of speaking French, as laid down by M. Vidocq.—Tr.

"Jes jes un fauteuil ché valé avec vo condichonner, un rangement por dage mo-a de confertachẽn, et ché valé vo tote suite donner à mo-a solouchaine so l'argent qué vo avez nécessaire, por faire manché, cuché, loché, chauffé, *planchir*, d'apord quatre chevals à mo-a, disse dogues por le chasse du fox, quatre John encore, ma carosse, et mon seignorie."

"Réflechen, né pas reflechen, parlez incontinent."

"Quinze mille francs—ah! prâve homme—lé probité à vo, il mérite dévanteiche, et le probité a mo-a il commande avec l'estime de vo, ene gratificachein relatife a mon bienfeidience; nous autres habitants de la Grand Britaine, nos avons continouallement oune calcoulachen de tête et oune calcoulachen de l'âme. Le calcoulachen de tête est l'économy, le calcoulachen de l'âme le liberality; vo avez entendement, mossio l'hôte! l'economy dit quinze, lé libérality, il dit vingt avec cinq encore, vingt-cinq."

"Non pas bonty, le resideince à votre auperche, elle etait

The innkeeper did not know what reply to make, but John, who saw his embarrassment, stood forward as interpreter to his master.

"My master inquires how much it will cost him per annum at your house for the board and lodging, first of his lordship, then for five servants, four horses, and

bocop rejoissante por ein anclaise: matame à vo charmante ein verity, petite l'enfant à matame, interessante family; bocop espiegle, ché lé aimais bocop; ah—mo-a aussi petite l'espiegle dans mon jouesse, vo riez mossio l'auperche. Ah! vo michantes ne pas rire."

"Vo avez encore dez femmes de chambre dont lé acacery, les oill black et lé pomme roge de figoure et les gros mamelles me plaissent veridiquement. Votre departement il mé a enchanté; cholis collinez, cholis côteaux, cholis boccages, cholis rifages, cholis qui coule, cholis sorces, le eau était oune, bonne potache. Vo avez en vo city oun society dé hytrophiles?"

"Ah! dommaiche, dommaiche! vo francaisse pas connaitre richesse de son contry—dans le Ancleterre, les hytrophiles il était lé piveurs de l'eau——; mo-a président souperior de sociéty des hytrophiles—, ché vol faire vo hytrophile."

"Partonnez, partonnez vo bon hytrophile, John, rappelez à mo-a por faire hytrophile mossio: savez vo, mossio l'auperche, que vo avez oun soleil tot-à-fait à mon fantasie, oune molt plaisant naturalité de situachen sor la terre, oun zephir tres appétissante per la dijérement, avec dans le haut oune perpetoualle agréabiliti de perspective dé séchour dé pienhoreux. Por tote ces ravissemente qui guérirai à mo-a mon melancoli; ché donne à vo vingt cinque mille francs, repondez, vo prénez vingt cinque mille francs?"

"Ah, vo acceptez."

"Vo volez faire contente mo-a? ah, John, donnez mon trésory dé voyage."

"Vo avez oune armoire."

"Ah, vo avez oune armoire! mo-a ché le casquette de la coton, ché metté dans lé interne de loui mille et encore cinque cent franque, vo por egality dans le même interne mettez aussi franque cinque cent et encore mille, en motoual security, dans lé armoire a vo ché mette en preïson casquette à mo-a, le preïson il demeure avec vo, et le clé il marche avec mo-a: au-

the dogs with which he will amuse himself in hunting the fox."

"That requires reflection."

"Reflection, no reflection, speak at once."

"Well then, sir, are fifteen thousand francs too much."

"Fifteen thousand francs—ah, good man! your honesty deserves more, and my honour commands, from its esteem of you, a recompense compensate with my good feeling towards you. We inhabitants of Great Britain have perpetually a calculation of the head and a calculation of the heart. The calculation of the head is economy, the calculation of the heart, liberality; you understand me, landlord? Economy says, fifteen; liberality says, twenty, with five added to it, twenty-five."

"You are too good, milord."

"Not at all; a residence at your inn is very delight-

jourthui mon seignorie quitte vo por huite jour, vo garde lachement à mon frais et si le finichein de mois il vienne, la seconde jorne morte à la principe dé souivante, ne pas voir ma retourne, vo force lé preïson et rende le liberty a lé réciproque indemnity per personnal avantage a vo: mo-a rétourne vo né plous voloir, mo-a trappe indemnity ein legitime compensachen; et John il feasait sa petite profit."

"Ah! vo volez faire plaissir à mo-a?"

"Allez, allez, mossio l'auperche, allez, faites plaissir à mo-a."

"C'était vo, vo avez lé contribuchen?"

"Vo venez metté à la bonnette, ah brave, brave—"

"Chetez dans le profond d'abord l'or a mo-a."

"Ah mossio l'auperche, vo cageinez à mo-a bocop de peine vo me faites injori por le manifestachen de confiance que ché mette en l'integrity de vo: chetez votre contingent sans nombrement aucune."

"Mossio l'auperche apportez le doble dépôt."

"Tendez le depot."

"A present lé eimbargo il est sur l'argent."

"Clique, claque, bon train postillone; creve la cheval, et né pas casse cou a mo-a, le recompense est au bout."

ful for an Englishman; your wife is a charming woman, and so is the little infant, and your interesting family, clean, lively children; I like them much. Ah, I was lively in my younger days; you laugh, landlord—ah, you may! Don't laugh."

"Milord, I will not take so great a liberty."

"You have two maid servants, whose little winning ways, black eyes, red cheeks, &c., please me very much. Your department has perfectly enchanted me; fine hills, fine seats, fine woods, fine banks, fine streams, fine fountains, the water is a real treat. Have you in your town a society of water-lovers (hydrophilists)?"

"I do not think, milord, that there are any hieroglyphics in the country."

"Ah, what a pity, what a pity! You Frenchmen do not know the worth of your own country. In England the hydrophilists, who are water-drinkers——I am president of the society of hydrophilists. I will make you a hydrophilist."

"Milord, I do not deserve so much honour from your lordship's hands."

"Pardon me, pardon me, my excellent hydrophilist; John, remind me that I make a hydrophilist. Do you know, innkeeper, that you have a sun precisely to my mind; one of the most pleasant situations on earth, an air extremely beneficial for digestion, and from the hills there is a perpetually agreeable prospect, which will make my residence here comfortable. For all these charms, which will cure my melancholy, I give you twenty-five thousand francs. Tell me, will you take twenty-five thousand francs?"

"Your generosity, milord, exceeds my pretensions."

"Oh, you accept my offer, then?"

"I will do all in my power to make your lordship contented."

"You will make me contented, ah! John, give me my travelling money-bag."

John takes from the secretary an enormous bag, and gives it to his master, who takes from it a handful of

gold pieces, which he piles in heaps of a hundred francs on the table, and when fifteen piles are made, milord gives the bag to John, and asks him for a cotton cap. This is the finale which denotes a fine stroke of originality. Certainly the landlord asks no better than to have at his house a boarder who pays as generously as milord; however, his lordship requires not only that the bargain, by virtue of which he and his people are to be fed and boarded for a year, should be put down in writing, but also wishes that a penalty should be added, as guarantee of the execution.

"You have a strong box?" he inquires of the host?"

"Yes, milord."

"Ah, you have a strong box! I have a cotton cap in which I have put, in louis, a thousand and five hundred francs, for your part put also within it five hundred francs and a thousand in louis, as a mutual security; put the cotton cap containing the two amounts into your strong box, and give me the key; to-day I shall go away for a week, you will keep on the lodging at my expense, and if, when the end of the next month comes, and the second day of the following month, I am not returned, break open the prison and set at liberty the mutual indemnity for your own private advantage. If we return, you will of course restore me the cap with the indemnity, and John will have some little consideration out of it."

The proposal was not very clear, but John undertook to be the interpreter.

"Milord," he says, making signals to the innkeeper to give full and entire consent, "milord will deposit fifteen hundred francs in this cap; you must deposit an equal sum, and the three thousand francs will be shut up in a strong box, of which milord will keep the key. Milord is going away for a week on some indispensable business, but you will not dispose of his apartment before the third of the next month; if at this time we are not here again, you can have the box opened, and the three thousand francs will be yours. If

on the contrary, we do return, and you do not wish to be held to your bargain, you will return the cap and contents, and the affair is settled. I presume that you will not object to place your share in the cap; but milord is in the habit of taking such precautions."

"Since it is milord's way, I am ready to comply."

"Ah, you will do what I wish,"

"Yes, milord, I only wish to have permission to go and get the money."

"Go, go, landlord, and oblige me in what I ask."

The aubergiste descends, and John, going after him, catechises him well: he advises him to strike while the iron is hot, and so well plays he his cards, that instead of fifteen hundred francs the innkeeper would give double. Either from his own hoards or from his neighbours he procures the sum in a very short time, and then going quickly up stairs, carrying the pieces of gold according to John's advice, he sees milord with his cloak on, walking up and down.

"Well, have you got the requisite sum?"

"Yes, milord, I have come to put it in the cap."

"You will put it in the cap; oh, very good, very good."

He takes the cotton cap, and holding it open with both his hands, says, "Throw in first my gold."

The landlord throws in successively the fifteen piles that are on the table, and that done, he sets about proving that he does not fail in an obolus of his quota.

"Ah, landlord, you give me much pain, you do me an injury by your manifestation of the confidence which I have placed in your integrity; throw in your amount without counting them one by one."

The landlord, faithful to the private instructions given to him by John, deposits his gold in the cap, and as soon as the two sums are placed together, milord ties them up with a riband, then walking gravely towards the strong box, he says,—

"Landlord, bring the double deposit."

The landlord obeys, and milord mounts a chair to

reach the top shelf, "Give me the deposit," and with his eyes elevated to the top place in the cupboard, the host gives the cap to milord; but whilst, with a shrug of the shoulders, John gives the good man a smile of approbation, by an expert manœuvre of his right hand the master puts the bag into his left hand, and instantly seizes from under his cloak a second cap, exactly like that which he has caused to disappear. The exchange made, the ascensional movement (the interruption of which has not been perceived) continues, and, when effected, the landlord is quite sure that his fifteen hundred francs are with those of milord. Milord is quite sure of the same thing.

"Now the embargo is laid on the money."

He gives a double turn with the key, descends from the chair, asks for his purse, pays without a murmur at the bill, bids every body farewell, and gets into his carriage with his faithful John.

"Drive away a good pace, postilion; never mind the horse, but do not break my neck: I will pay you."

"Take milord over the best sides of the road," shrieks out the innkeeper, who trembles lest any accident should happen to milord.

"Good heavens," said his wife, "I hope milord will not perceive the bad state of the roads! fortunately they are dry."

"Yes, but the dust."

"Why did you not put in the carriage a bottle of your syrup of lemon?"

"Never thought of it."

"What a woman you are, you never do anything like another woman. Postilion, postilion! Mr. John, milord; bah! they are off like shot. Heaven," says in petto the complaisant landlord, "guide the coursers that carry Cæsar and my fortune!!!"

At length, at the end of three months the aubergiste for fear of offending milord, waits for him six weeks longer; this lapse of time passed away he resolves to

take off the *embargo*; the door of the strong box is forced, there is the cap, he takes it down, unties the string, and finds—what?—forged coin.

Sablin, who played the Englishman to perfection *, was a master of this kind of robbery. One day he carried off in this way five thousand francs from an innkeeper: this latter was not a Greek, although he lived at Troyes: his Troyes was in Champagne.

* Certainly, if the above be a specimen of his talents! Tr.

CHAPTER LXXV.

LES GRECES OR SOULASSES.

The pigeon—the pieces of gold—the case—the forgotten key—the bullets.

The grèces are generally countrymen, who are incessantly on the move, either in the diligences or on foot; they always assume the appearance best suited to enable them to effect their designs on the persons whom they intend to make their prey and exercise their experiments upon.

They generally go in parties of three; each travelling alone to seek for "*flats:*" sometimes, to be sure, one goes on the hunt and the others await him at the head-quarters.

As soon as the *grèce* who has the charge of forming an acquaintance meets with the individual on whom he thinks he can play off a successful manœuvre, he endeavours to get on terms of intimacy with him, and when he has got from him the particulars of his condition, if he perceives any chance of plucking his feathers, he goes and lodges in the same house or inn with his new formed friend, waiting patiently until opportunity shall present itself of effecting his projected purpose.

If the pigeon whom he seeks to unplume has come to receive any money, or brought goods to Paris, the *grèce* does not lose sight of him until he has received what he expects. Very frequently, that they may be more certain that the products of the sale shall not escape their clutches, they arrange to buy the goods themselves, or at least to facilitate their disposal.

The spy posted near the *pigeon* to watch his measures gives his accomplices an account of every motion as soon as made. He gives them, in some sort, hour

after hour, the bulletin of his actions, and when he thinks that it is time to be up and doing, he warns them to be in readiness to second his plans.

The moment fixed for the perpetration of the scheme having arrived, under some pretext or other the *grèce* induces the *pigeon* to go out with him: they go into the streets together, but scarcely have they advanced a few paces, when a man, whose accent denotes him to be a stranger, accosts them, and makes them comprehend that he wants to find his way to the Palais Royal.

"What do you want there?" inquires the *grèce*. The man shows several pieces of money, generally large coin, or Italian pieces of forty-francs, and, manifesting a desire to get them changed, he gives an account, of which this is the sum and substance:—

He was in the service of a very rich man, who died and left him a vast number of these pieces, the value of which he is ignorant of; all he knows is, that, when he changes it, they give him five white pieces. Immediately, to show the sort of white pieces, he pulls out a hundred sous piece. At the same moment, the grèce, taking from his pocket six pieces of five francs each, proposes to the domestic that he shall give him the gold coin for them; to which he assents, apparently very well satisfied, and in his language gives him to understand, that he should not be sorry to have more white money.

A money-changer's shop cannot be established in the open air, they therefore enter a cabaret, and there the stranger, with pieces of gold, opens a case containing a hundred, which he offers for thirty francs each.

The grèce, *aside* to the pigeon, does not fail to remark how advantageous it would be to them to make such a bargain, adding,—"But, before we conclude the bargain, I think it only cautious to show the pieces to a goldsmith, in order to ascertain if they be good."

The pigeon thinks with his companion. He goes

out with one of the pieces, and returns with forty francs which he has received in exchange. There can be no further doubt; the thing is safe; the profit very considerable: ten francs for each piece: he cannot have too many on such terms, and without hesitation, he gets rid of all his white money. If he has not enough, he is ready to borrow. At last the exchange is effected. They count the pieces of gold, and put them back into the case: but the pretended servant, who is an expert juggler, substitutes for the case containing the precious metal, one exactly similar, and after this legerdemain, as it is necessary to go away as speedily as possible, he says, since they have assayed his gold, he also wishes to examine the silver they have given him.

"Of course," observes the pigeon's Mentor, "there can be no objection to that;" and the pigeon, whom the hopes of excessive profit has made half mad, consents, with the best grace in the world, to the carrying off of his hundred sous pieces. What risk does he run? is not the case his guarantee?

The servant has disappeared, and the companion of the dupe, under pretence of some want, goes out for a moment, as he says, and joins his "*pal*."

The pigeon is plucked: he will never see them again. As yet he is ignorant of his misfortune.—He waits ten minutes—twenty minutes—half an hour—an hour; at first he grows impatient, then begins to get fidgety, then disquieted, then come suspicions, and the utmost alarm. He opens the case, or has it forced, if it have a secret spring, and finds within only pence or bullets. Sometimes the grèces, instead of a case, have a tin box or a small leathern bag with a padlock to close it.

When the pigeon appears somewhat distrustful, the two sharpers have recourse to a different system of tactics. He who has cleared the way, takes the cash from the hands of the other, and says, placing it in the hands of the *flat* he is trying to catch, "We will go to the changers to examine the coin."

The pigeon, thinking that his friend advises him cautiously, immediately goes out with him, leaving the pretended servant in the cabaret. They walk together, when suddenly the sharper stops, and, as if struck with an idea, says, "The key, the key of the case, have you got it?"

"No."

"No! quick then, run and fetch it,—or stay, I will go myself; wait here."

The thief has no sooner gone away, than he joins his comrade, who has also left the rendezvous. If by some chance the pigeon will not quit his friend, the friend walks on with him until an opportunity offers of absconding, which he does down some passage or elsewhere.

The *exchange* is a mode of swindling by which many persons have been taken in. Country dealers, travellers, even Parisians have lost considerable sums. The more the simpleton, with whom the grèces have to do, is greedy of profit, the more easily is he duped. To protect one's self from the cunning of these knaves, it is sufficient never to talk of private affairs before strangers, not to speak in their presence of the money one has, and particularly to abstain from purchasing for thirty francs, pieces of gold worth forty. Every man to his trade.

The famous *Sablin* and *Germain* called the *Père de Tuile*, were two very skilful grèces. One day they contrived to get three thousand five hundred francs from a countryman. Germain, in presence of whom he had boasted of his exploits as a sportsman, played the part of adviser.

"Faith, sir," said he to the countryman, putting the case into his hand, "you have made a profitable speculation, you may spend your winter merrily, and go hunting when you please."

The case contained only small shot. This speech, which I have from the sufferer and the two sharpers, was, it must be allowed, a tolerable specimen of impudence.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

LES RAMASTIQUES.

(Halves)—The reader of posting bills—The accommodating man—Mishap to a *cordon-bleu*—The husband and wife, or the watch and chain—A domestic breeze—Pickpocket and forger—The will of the law.

The *Ramastiques* are sharpers, who, like many others of the same genus, owe their success solely to the cupidity of their dupes. The exercise of their industry implies an association of three persons, or at least two. This is their mode of proceeding, when they seek to appropriate to themselves the property of another. From day-break they go and commence their course of observation on the road, near some of the barriers, and then examine very carefully all comers and goers, until they pounce upon one of those individuals whose physiognomy and costume betray excessive simplicity. Their man is a credulous and avaricious fellow: whether countryman or not, such a one, whether coming or going, is always the individual they would fain get hold of, always presuming that he is not in want of money. If they mark down a bird of this feather, one of them, generally the most insinuating of the three, accosts him, and pumps him in that neat and delicate way, that, by the application of some half dozen questions, brings them to the desirable knowledge of what may be the state of the financial department, the exchequer, of the unsuspicious *flat*. This information obtained, a telegraphic dispatch informs the coadjutors of the state of things. If they be favourable, a second sharper, who has gone on forward, lets fall a box, a purse, or a parcel, in such a way that the stranger cannot help remarking the circumstance. He makes his comment out aloud, but at the moment when he stoops

to pick it up, his new acquaintance cries "halves." They stop to see in what consists the treasure—it is generally a precious jewel, a ring richly set, brilliant shirt buttons, ear-rings, &c. A writing always accompanies the gem; what does it contain? The *yokel* seldom knows how to read, and of course his "new fledged comrade" knows no better than himself, and yet the paper may contain some necessary and useful information, but to whom to address it? they fear to commit any indiscretion. In the mean time they continue walking, and suddenly, at a corner of a street, they see a man reading the posting bills, and nothing could be better for their purpose.

"Parbleu," says the comrade, "we could not have met with a better person; here is a gentleman who will relieve us from our embarrassment, show him the paper, he will tell us the meaning of it; but let us be particularly careful not to speak to him of what we have found, for he might put in his claim to a share."

The stranger is delighted, promises prudence, and they go up to the reader, who, with much complaisance, complys with the request, and reads:

"Sir,—I send your ring set with fresh brilliants, for which your servant has paid me two thousand seven hundred and twenty-five francs, for which this is a receipt. "BRISEBARD, *Jeweller*."

Two thousand seven hundred and twenty-five francs! We may judge how the sound of such a sum, the half of which was to come to him, sounds musically in the rustic's ear. The obliging reader (who is the third accomplice) does not fail to emphatize the figures; they thank him for his complaisance and go on their way.

The next step to be taken is on the subject of the jewel. Shall they return it? certainly not. If it belonged to a poor devil, all very well; but whoever can purchase diamonds is a rich man, and what to a rich man are two thousand seven hundred and twenty-five francs?—a trifle, which he cares nothing about

losing. If they will not return it, it is plain that they will keep it—that is to say, they will realize it in specie.—But where can they sell it? at a jeweller's? perhaps the proprietor of the jewel has already circulated hand-bills, and then some jewellers are so fastidious;—the best way will be not to sell it for some time—The rustic comprehends all the reasons perfectly. If it were possible, they would divide it on the spot and part good friends, but a division is impossible, and yet each wishes to go on his business. Really, the situation begins to be quite unpleasant, and on both sides they begin to scratch their heads, to produce an idea.

"If I had money," says the *Ramastique*, "I would willingly give it to you, but I have not a penny.—What can we do?"—then pausing for a moment, he resumes.

"Listen, you seem a good honest fellow, and I think I can trust you, advance to me a few hundred francs, and when you have sold the thing, you can hand me over the residue, of course keeping back the interest of the sum you may advance to me. Of course you will leave me your address."

A proposition of this kind is rarely refused—the rustic, seduced by the appearance of a gain, of which he conceals the after-thought, empties his purse with pleasure: if it be not sufficiently stocked, he does not hesitate to add his watch. I have seen some who had given all, even to the buckles of their shoes. The bargain concluded, they separate with a promise to see each other again, although they have secretly determined never to do any thing of the kind if they can avoid it. Out of twenty countrymen thus deceived, eighteen at least give a false name and a false address; and we cannot be astonished, because in this case, to be made a dupe, it is necessary first to be a rogue.

The *Ramastiques* are most frequently Jews, whose wives also follow this line of business. They usually frequent markets, where they prey on the credulity of nurses and cooks, who seem fresh from the provinces,

and have not rubbed off the rust. A chain of brass, excessively well gilt, so as to be with difficulty known from the real metal, composes the object with which they deceive the unsuspecting flats. One of the victims, a *cordon-bleu*, came one day to the police-office to make her complaint; they had stripped her of all her money, her ear-rings, her shawl, and her basket, containing the day's provision, left as the guarantee for fifteen francs, which she was to take to them. As she was in earnest, she hastened back to keep her promise; but on her return she found neither woman, basket, nor provisions. Then only she had her suspicions aroùsed, which the touchstone of a goldsmith, consulted too late, fully confirmed.

At a certain epoch, the *Ramastiques* were so numerous, that they showed themselves at once in all quarters of the city. I have received on the same morning man and wife, who came to complain of having been duped by *Ramastiques*, the husband in the fauxbourg Saint-Honoré, the wife in the market of the Innocents.

"Never was such a fool as you," said the head of the family, the lord and master, to his unfortunate moiety, "to give your gold chain and ten francs for a copper chain."

"You are a bigger fool yourself! You have certainly a right to talk! go and take your pin to the Mont de Piété, a bit of trumpery glass! and if you please, my gentleman, you were not content with giving the money which you had about you, but must return to the house to get sixty francs, which were all we possessed, two table spoons and your watch."

"I did what I liked: it is no business of yours."

"But it is not the less true, that you have been gulled."

"Gulled, gulled! very fine, madame; I have not always allowed myself to be gulled by gossips, and had you not been gossiping according to custom—"

"If you had passed on your way, without stopping to chatter with the first comer—".

"I chatter! yes, I chatter about my affairs, and you!—"

"Ah! your affairs are well attended to."

"As well as yours, I hope. Go away with you when you get a gold chain again it shall do your eyes good. Yours was one that went three times round, too. I gave it you for your birth-day present, too, and you ought to be content with it; but you shall long for one three times before you get it."

"How well off we shall be when we want to know the hour!"

"Hold your tongue, you are a fool!"

"Ah, that's very fine! very fine, indeed! They caught you; so much the better, my dear! I only regret one thing, and that is, that they did not get more out of you."

"Parbleu! you only tell me what I knew before! It is not to-day that I have first perceived that you cared very little about the interest of the house."

The couple left the office quarrelling. I know not how long the dispute lasted, but it is only reasonable to suppose that reflection terminated their mutual reproaches. Heaven forfend that, to hasten the reconciliation, they have not been compelled to come to blows!

When three *ramastiques* are together, each of them has a costume adapted to the part he has to play. The one who accosts is generally clad as a workman, a mason, bootmaker, carpenter; sometimes he affects the German or Italian accent, and appears to express himself in French with some difficulty. If he is old, he is a jolly fellow; if young, he is a simpleton. The *faux perdant* (loser of the false gem) is to be distinguished by the length and width of his trowsers, one of the legs of which serve as the conductor of the object to make it reach the ground. The *reader* is generally more respectably dressed than the two others: it is he who puts on the frock-coat and velvet-collar, and is decked in a long-napped hat.

For a long time the *ramastiques* were handed over

to the correctional police, and the maximum of punishment which they underwent was five years' imprisonment. It seemed to me that some distinction should be made with them, and that, when the swindling had been effected by aid of a forged writing, the offence assumed a graver character and fell under the cognizance of the Courts of Assize.

I determined on availing myself of the first opportunity to present to the judicial authorities some observations on this head, and it was not slow to present itself. I apprehended the two oldest professors of the *ramastique* art, BALESE, alias *Marquis*, and his accomplice. When I first gave my opinion, it was disregarded: they persisted in wishing to pass sentence on the offenders according to the custom which time had consecrated; but I returned to the charge with vigour, and the two sharpers, taken before a jury, were committed, as forgers, to solitary imprisonment, and to be branded.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

LES ESCARPES, OR GARCONS DE CAMPAGNE.

Insinuating manners—Good people—The Cornu family—The prepared *alibi*—The peripatetics—The cripple.

NEARLY all assassins by profession assume the appearance of travelling hawkers, cattle-drivers, horse-dealers, &c. Their costume and manners are always assorted with the business they are supposed to carry on: they generally affect mild manners, and a calm, steady air: they are seldom addicted to wine, because they fear lest intoxication should overtake them: they always have correct passports, which are countersigned with the most scrupulous exactitude. In the *auberge* they pay without appearing prodigal: they wish to be thought economical, because economy pre-supposes honesty: however, in settling the bill, they never forget the chamber-maid or waiter. It is of much consequence to an *escarpe* that the servants should think him a good sort of man.

The assassins who assume the guise of travelling hawkers, carry but few goods with them. Their stock generally consists of cutlery, scissors, razors, ribands, laces, and other goods which pack into small compass. The auberges situated in the suburbs of cities and near markets are those which they prefer as their lodging-houses: there they single out their victims, either from amongst real shopkeepers, or the gardeners who come to market to sell the produce of their gardens or fields. They endeavour to learn the amount of the money they carry about with them, the moment of their departure, the road they are about to take, and once in possession of these particulars, they inform their accomplices, who are always at another house, very frequently in the same town. Then they go in advance, and wait in the most

opportune spot for the propitious moment of accomplishing the crime they meditate.

The *escarpes* are malefactors who are never mistrusted, because they are accustomed to see them traverse the roads of the country; and the apparent regularity of their conduct places them out of the reach of suspicion. The Cornu family, whom I have before spoken of in the first volume of these Memoirs *, was a family of *escarpes*, for more than twenty years enjoying the most perfect impunity, and committing many hundred murders before any suspicion was aroused.

The best mode of safety against the attempts of these wretches, is to speak as little as possible of private business, never to talk of receiving money, and to avoid all explanations, both on the object and time of your journey.

Travellers should be on their guard against impertinent intruders on the highways, who profit by all opportunities of accosting persons and entering into conversation. An officious inquirer is always a person whose intentions are suspicious, particularly if he commence the conversation concerning the safety of the roads, or the necessity of being well armed. The farmers who sometimes do not leave the markets until nightfall, cannot be too much on their guard against persons who like, they say, to travel in company. At any rate, any sudden *liaison* is imprudent when away from home.

The wives of the *escarpes* are also very dangerous women. Familiarized with murder, they willingly lend their aid to consummate it: they teach their children at an early age to be on the watch; and to convey to them information by which they and their husbands may profit: they habituate them to the sight of blood; and to interest them in their success, at each assassination a sort of blood-hound's fee is given to these juvenile monsters.

No person is more complaisant than a male or female

* Vol. I. p. 216, et seq.

escarpe: no one more charitable: all the beggars are their friends, because beggars can furnish useful indications; and being always on the road and on the tramp, are the natural spies of the high road. The female escarpes carry their hypocrisy to such an extent, as to assume all the outward marks of deep devotion. They wear rosaries, scapularies, crucifixes, &c. They assist regularly at the holy offices, and occasionally take the Sacrament at the Holy Table.

The men generally wear a fustian or stuff smock-frock of a blue colour, intended to keep their clothes from the spots of blood. A murder committed, they make away with the frock, bury it, burn it, or sometimes wash it, according as they have more or less time before them. A stick, with a kind of hand-whip, a hat covered with gummed taffety, under which is a red or blue handkerchief enveloping the head, complete the appearance of these hell-hounds, who are skilled in preparing circumstances, which, in time of need, can be adduced as proving an *alibi*. It is, in fact, for this purpose that they have their passports *visé* in all the towns through which they pass.

Happily for society, the *escarpes* are now very few in number except some of the southern departments. However, I do not fear to affirm that they cannot be effectually extirpated, and assassination prevented, so long as France shall be traversed in all directions by peripatetic glass-sellers, umbrella-sellers, ballad-singers, kettle-menders, mountebanks, jugglers, puppet-show men, organ-players, leaders of bears and camels, showers of magic lanterns, coblers, slight-of-hand men at fairs, cripples false or real, &c. Apropos of these latter, it is not superfluous to advise travellers to mistrust those men who, fallen into a ditch, and pretending inability to extricate themselves, call to them for help; let them remember the destiny of the *cul-di-jatte* *, who thus attracted passengers to their assassination. Those who

* One who goes with his sitting part in a bowl.

were unfortunate enough to yield to a feeling of compassion he stabbed to the heart with a dagger the moment they stooped to aid him. It is dangerous to sleep in road-side houses, particularly if lonely. The landlords may be honest, but those who frequent the house are not always so, and the least harm that may happen to a poor devil who passes the night there, is to be plundered of all he has during the night.

The safety of the kingdom requires that we should free our soil from the roving population that infests it: they are a real scourge, and it is impossible to *surveiller* them. At the present day, in the smallest village, there are professions for all wants, and we cannot imagine why measures have not been taken to compel to a residence those peripatetics of every kind. These ambulatory modes of life of individuals who hawk about a trade, can only be suffered in times of barbarism or amongst a people whose civilization is scarcely at its commencement.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Salambier—The Mayor's order—The false allies—Dogs at fault—A fortunate occurrence—A fugue—The Zero of life—The Alpha, Omega and Beta—1816.

In the same manner as the Garçons de Campagne, the *Riffaudeurs* generally assumed the garb of country-dealers or travelling hawkers. Riffaudeurs were a species of thieves who sought to wring from their victims a confession of where they had concealed their treasure, by applying fire to the soles of the feet. When they had selected a fit object for their purpose, they contrived to introduce themselves to his notice under pretence of disposing of their merchandise, and during the course of their bargaining, managed to make themselves acquainted with all the localities of his dwelling, as well as its modes of egress or ingress. When it occurred that a house presented great difficulties in the way of obtaining admittance according to their usual plans, an emissary, disguised in the rags of poverty, was dispatched to seek a night's lodging "for the love of charity," beneath the roof against which their machinations were directed. Such artful masters of their trade seldom failed to work upon the benevolent feelings to which they addressed themselves, and once admitted to the rights of hospitality they never failed to reward their abused host by rising when all was still, and opening the door for the admission of their comrades. When, as it frequently happened, a watchful dog kept guard over the house, the false mendicant easily reduced him to silence by delighting his olfactory nerves with the odour of a sponge dipped in a peculiar kind of liquor, or by the enticing smell of fresh-boiled horse's liver. These seductions were invariably found sufficient to allay the fury of every species of dog, from the yelping cur to the deep growl

of the mastiff, who would, with all possible docility, follow their tempters about, and submit even to being led by them still and noiselessly from the premises, leaving their master's property in the undisturbed possession of the brigands.

Occasionally, the chauffeurs had recourse to a more summary mode of ridding themselves from all chance of annoyance from the animal, by casting in his way about nightfall a subtle poison, so prompt in its effects that the unfortunate beast was stretched stiff in death by the time their operations commenced.

Doubtlessly, we are best fulfilling the commands of our Maker in helping each other, and kindly bestowing a resting-place to those aching heads and weary limbs, which must otherwise have perished for want of necessary aid; but in thus obeying the dictates of humanity, would it not be as well to secure our own persons from the insidious attacks of such as we have been describing? For instance, might not farmers and other inhabitants of the country, manage to appropriate to the use of the wayworn traveller, a chamber as much detached as possible from the part of the house occupied by themselves? For better security its windows should be grated and defended with strong bars of iron, and the doors secured by locks fixed outwardly, in a manner to defy their being forced; so that the strangers received by all kindly disposed and charitable might thus obtain the rest and refreshment they were in search of, at the same time their generous entertainers would have nothing to fear from their bad intentions.

Not unfrequently the chauffeurs sought to wipe out in the blood of their victims the traces of their murderous villainy; at other times, to prevent a chance of recognition, they concealed their features beneath a mask, or blackened them over with a composition which was speedily removed as soon as it had answered their purpose, by rubbing a certain pomade; at other times they enveloped their head in a black crape. Those who preferred the plan of using a blacken-

ing hue for their countenance, generally carried it about them in a box made with two divisions, in one of which was contained the black dye and in the other the means of removing it.

Before starting upon any of their expeditions they took care to furnish themselves with strong cords of from four to five feet in length, for the purpose of binding their victims.

These wretches always departed singly, having first appointed a general rendezvous, to which they all repaired by different roads and at different intervals of time, travelling thither by the least frequented paths. One piece of their tact consisted in never absenting themselves from home till the shades of night concealed them, and without having first taken the precaution of drawing upon themselves the notice of their neighbours just before they started. The same method observed upon their return had the effect of destroying all suspicion or idea of their having been away from the place even for an hour; and enabled them, in any case which required it, even to prove an *alibi*.

The riffaudeurs disdained to burthen themselves with property less valuable or less portable than gold or diamonds; and as the latter articles were but seldom to be obtained in the country, their usual search was for what current coin they could extract from the unfortunate inhabitants.

The famous Salambier had for a long time projected the constraining a rich farmer of the neighbourhood of Perpignan to give him an account of his money bags; but this scheme was much sooner devised than executed, for the farmer kept a strict guard over his premises; indeed, in the general terror excited by the continual depredations of the chauffeurs, it would have been strange had he not partaken of the general panic. In addition to every security that could be thought of to exclude these formidable robbers from intruding upon his property, the prudent master had placed two vigilant dogs to guard the approaches to it. Salambier

had already reconnoitred the possibility of his enterprise; but the more he reflected upon it, the greater and more insurmountable did the difficulties it presented appear. Nevertheless, as the result of his inquiries proved that the farmer kept a very considerable sum in the house, his covetous propensities were only more keenly excited to obtain it—but how?—that indeed was a problem it required all the ingenuity of his brain to solve. At length, however, he hit upon the following expedient.

Having obtained from some of the inhabitants to whom he was known a certificate of good conduct, &c. he carried it to the Mayor de Poperingue in order to obtain his signature. This important point achieved, he contrived to wash the paper over with muriatic acid in such a manner as to preserve only the attestation of the mayor and the seal of the corporation. On the sheet thus rendered blank, he then caused one of his troop, named Louis Lemaire, to write the following order:—

"Monsieur le Commandant,

"I am given to understand that on the coming night some ten or twelve chauffeurs will attempt to break into the farm d'Oermaille; you will therefore disguise ten of your boldest men, and send them under the command of a subaltern officer to the said farm, in order that they may, in case of necessity, be at hand to assist the farmer, and secure those depredators who may present themselves into his dwelling to levy contributions therein. The magistrate of the corporation of Lebel, to whom you will communicate this order will serve as a guide to your detachment, and introduce the party to the worthy farmer, by whom he is well known."

Salambier having thus fabricated the order, lost no time in putting himself at the head of ten of his accomplices, and presenting himself at the house of the functionary, who was thus unknowingly to aid him in his criminal projects. This latter, recognizing the signa-

ture, conducted the supposed soldiers and their officers to the farm. Auxiliaries arriving so seasonably could not fail of meeting with a warm reception. Salambier and his gang were received with open arms, and the robber chief and his associates were hailed with thanks and blessings as the preservers and liberators of the whole province.

"Now then, my friends," cried Salambier, (who styled himself a sergeant,) let's to business; how many are you in number in this house?"

"Fifteen in all," replied the farmer, "that is, including four women and a child."

"Four women and a child! helpless creatures! don't reckon them, pray—only five useless beings who in a time of danger can do nothing but add to one's difficulties."

"What arms have you?"

"Two good muskets."

"Well, bring them, that they may be in readiness; besides 'tis as well that I should ascertain how far they are likely to be of service to us."

The fire arms were accordingly placed in the hands of Salambier, who immediately withdrew their charges.

"Now," said he, "that I am informed of the state of the place, you may with confidence repose in me the care of defending you; at the proper time I will assign to each one his post; meanwhile the best thing you can all do is to rest in safety, in the full assurance that your garrison will watch over your safety."

Midnight arrived without Salambier's having made any fresh arrangement; all at once he feigned to have have heard a noise.

"Up, my lads!" cried he to his companions: "now is the time, we have not a single moment to lose, I will place you so that not a soul shall escape."

At the voice of their chief the whole troop were in arms, and the farmer, seizing a lantern, offered to light them on their way.

"Pray don't disturb yourself," said Salambier, pre-

senting two pistols to his breast; "we have the honour to be the worthy gentlemen you style Chauffeurs. Stir not hand or foot, or the next instant sees you dead my feet."

The Chauffeurs were so completely armed that it would have been madness for the panic-stricken inhabitants of the farm to have attempted any opposition, and they were compelled to submit to their ferocious visiters, who having fastened their hands firmly behind their backs, locked them in the cellar. Pinioned like the rest, the unfortunate farmer was left standing by the chimney till the rough voice of the robber Salambier called upon him to declare where he kept his money.

"Heaven knows," replied the trembling victim, "that it is long since I have kept more than a mere trifle in the house; you may be sure since the many alarms the neighbourhood has experienced from the attacks of the Chauffeurs, few people would be imprudent enough to keep large sums by them."

"A truce with such idle prating," exclaimed Salambier; "come, my old one, we shall arrive at the truth yet, in spite of you;" and, making a sign to two of his men, they seized the farmer, and stripping his feet quite bare, anointed them all over with grease.

"Gentlemen! Chauffeurs! I implore of you, have mercy upon me! I vow, I swear in the name of all the saints, that I have not five shillings in my whole house—let it be well searched—take my keys, demand of me whatsoever you think proper—only speak, all I have is at your service—I will give you a note of hand if you require it."

"No, no, my worthy," cried Salambier, "you mistake, we are not merchants who can negociate your promissory notes.—Note of hand indeed! ha, ha, we do not manage our money upon quite so slow a method—hard cash, my fine fellow, paid upon the nail, is what we are accustomed to."

"But, gentlemen!"

"Oh! oh! so you mean to be obstinate, do you? Well,

you may do as you like, but before you are five minutes older you will be glad enough to tell us the secret of your money bags,—(a large fire was blazing on the hearth). "Comrades," exclaimed the hardened villain, "*singe* this headstrong fellow."

But whilst the most horrible of tortures was thus being inflicted on the hapless farmer, piercing cries were heard, evidently proceeding from some one who was vainly striving to escape from the violence of an enraged dog, whose yellings and angry barkings came mingled with the agonized cry of the distressed person. This unexpected uproar arrested the fiery persecution of the brigands; they listened, and discovered in the person on whom the furious beast was satiating his frenzied rage, one of the helpers of the farm, who, having contrived to escape from bondage, had crept out by a back door, in order to bring succour to the rest of the wretched family. By some inconceivable fatality the dogs had not recognised his voice.

Surprised at this unexpected occurrence, Salambier commanded one of his men to go and silence a commotion so likely to attract unpleasant notice; but scarcely had the Chauffeur reached the court-yard, than he in his turn became the object of the dog's fury, and with such determined hatred did the beast fix his teeth into his flesh that, to save his life, he rushed back to the room he had just before quitted, exclaiming, in the most piteous accents, "Save yourselves—save yourselves."

This cry, uttered with the expression of the most excessive terror, filled the whole band with the greatest alarm, and scarcely knowing the nature of the danger from which they fled, they precipitated themselves through a window which looked out upon the country, and were soon out of sight. Meanwhile, the farmer, accompanied by the man (who had at length succeeded in silencing the noise of the dog, who now recollected him and was busily licking his hand), descended to the cellar and delivered all his affrighted household from their state of terror. He lost no time in setting off in

full chase of the Chauffeurs, but his diligence was in vain, they had got the start of him, and he found it impossible to overtake them.

Salambier (who related this adventure to me) assured me that at the bottom of his heart he did not regret the circumstance of their hasty retreat—"for," said he to me, "in the dread of being recognised by them, I should have been obliged to murder the whole party."

Salambier's band was one of the most numerous, branching out into immense ramifications, and several years were required ere the whole of it was suppressed. In 1804, several individuals who had formed part of it were executed at Anvers; one of them, whose real name has never transpired, appeared to have received a most finished education. When he had mounted the scaffold, he raised his eyes to the fatal knife, then lowering them to the block, whom another criminal styled the Zero of life, "I have seen the *alpha*," said he, "now I see the *omega*;" and turning to the executioner, "behold the *beta*. *Beta*, do your duty." However perfect a Greek scholar a man may be, to make such allusions on the very spot of execution in "*articulo mortis*," would bespeak one possessed by the very demon of pleasantry.

But all the accomplices of Salambier have not yet received the penalty of their offences. I have frequently encountered them in my various peregrinations, and although I have constantly kept my eye upon them, I have tried in vain to terminate the impunity which they have but too long enjoyed, and still continue to experience.

One of these scoundrels has taken up the profession of a street singer, and for a long time astonished the ears of the inhabitants of Paris by singing, or rather bawling some words to the air of a Tartarian march, whilst, to give greater effect to his performance, he exhibited himself in a Turkish costume.

This skilful personage was one of the most celebrated on the pavé of Paris, where he was only designated by his surname, for the dexterity with which he would

fling a ballad to the seventh story of a house by the aid of a halfpenny, so cleverly placed, that having served to convey the song to the destined window, the copper fell again at its master's feet.

He certainly had strong claims to notoriety, for he was accused of having taken part in the massacres of September, 1793; and in November, 1828, he was seen at the head of a possé of window smashers in the Rue St. Denis.

Franchet the police agent, and the Jesuitical party to which he was devoted, cherished great projects, but to bring them to perfection they would have required the aid of assassins, and they actually kept a number in their pay.

Since the year 1816, the Chauffeurs appear to have been condemned to a life of inaction. Their last exploits had for their theatre the south of France, principally the environs of Nismes, Marseilles, and Montpelier, during the dictatorship of Monsieur Trestaillon. Then, both Protestants and Buonapartists who possessed sufficient to tempt their cupidity, became the objects of the Chauffeurs' attacks, and that worthy representative of the *Verdets*, the chamber of "*incomparables*," relished the joke, and thought it "*fine nuts to crack.*"

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

We add, for the benefit of the uninitiated, translations of the three songs that have appeared in Vol. III. of these Memoirs, at the respective pages 56, 59, and 169. The first we have taken from the Noctes Ambrosianæ of Blackwood's Magazine for July, 1829; the other two, with "all their faults and all their errors," are to be added to the list of the translator's sins, who would apologise to the Muse, did he but know which of the nine presides over slang poetry*.

I.

ODOHERTY—*Cantat.*

"As from ken (1) to ken I was going,
Doing a bit on the prigging lay (2);
Who should I meet, but a jolly blowen (3),
Tol lol, lol lol, tol derol, ay;
Who should I meet, but a jolly blowen,
Who was fly (4) to the time o' day(5).

* Quere *Cly-o*?—Printer's Devil.

(1) *Ken*—shop, house. (2) *Prigging lay*—thieving business.
(3) *Blowen*—girl, strumpet, sweetheart.
(4) *Fly*, [contraction of *flash*] *awake*—up to, practised in.
(5) *Time o'day*—knowledge of *business*, thieving, &c.

" Who should I meet, but a jolly blowen,
Who was fly to the time o' day;
I pattered in flash (6), like a covey (7), knowing,
Tol lol, &c.
'Ay, bub or grubby (8), I say.'

" I pattered in flash, like a covey knowing,
'Ay, bub or grubby, I say.'—
'Lots of gatter,' (9) quo' she, 'are flowing,
Tol lol, &c.
Lend me a lift in the family way (10).

" 'Lots of gatter,' quo' she, 'are flowing,
Lend me a lift in the family way.
You may have a crib (11) to stow in,
Tol lol, &c.
Welcome, my pal (12), as the flowers in May.

" 'You may have a bed to stow in;
Welcome, my pal, as the flowers in May.'
To her ken at once I go in,
Tol lol, &c.
Where in a corner out of the way;

" To her ken at once I go in,
Where in a corner, out of the way,
With his smeller (13), a trumpet blowing,
Tol lol, &c.
A regular swell-cove (14) lushy (15) lay.

(6) *Pattered in flash*—spoke in slang. (7) *Covey*—man.
(8) *Bub and grub*—drink and food. (9) *Gatter*—porter.
(10) *Family*—the thieves in general. *The family way*—the thieving line.
(11) *Crib*—bed. (12) *Pal*—friend, companion, paramour.
(13) *Smeller*—nose. *Trumpet blowing* here is not slang, but poetry for snoring.
(14) *Swell-cove*—gentleman, dandy.
(15) *Lushy*—drunk.

" With his smeller, a trumpet blowing,
A regular swell-cove lushy lay;
To his clies (16) my hooks (17) I throw in,
Tol lol, &c.
And collar his dragons (18) clear away.

" To his clies my hooks I throw in,
And collar his dragons clear away;
Then his ticker (19) I set a-going,
Tol lol, &c.
And his onions (20), chain, and key.

" Then his ticker I set a-going,
With his onions, chain, and key.
Next slipt off his bottom clo'ing,
Tol lol, &c.
And his gingerbread topper gay.

" Next slipt off his bottom clo'ing,
And his gingerbread topper gay.
Then his other toggery (21) stowing,
Tol lol, &c.
All with the swag (22), I sneak away.

" Then his other toggery stowing,
All with the swag, I sneak away;
' Tramp it, tramp it, my jolly blowen,
Tol lol, &c.
Or be grabbed (23) by the beaks (24) we may.

(16) *Clies*—pockets. (17) *Hooks*—fingers; in full, *thieving hooks*. (18) *Collar his dragons*—take his sovereigns; on the obverse of a sovereign is, or was, a figure of St. George and the *dragon*. The etymon of collar is obvious to all persons who know the taking ways of Bow-street, and elsewhere. It is a whimsical coincidence, that the motto of the Marquis of Londonderry is, " Metuenda *corolla draconis*." Ask the city of London, if " I fear I may not collar the dragons," would not be a fair translation. (19) *Ticker*—watch. The French slang is *toequante*.
(20) *Onions*—seals. (21) *Toggery*—clothes from *toga*.
(22) *Swag*—plunder. (23) *Grabbed*—taken.
(24) *Beaks*—police-officers.

" ' Tramp it, tramp it, my jolly blowen,
Or be grabbed by the beaks we may;
And we shall caper a-heel-and-toeing,
Tol lol, &c.
A Newgate hornpipe some fine day.

" 'And we shall caper a-heel-and-toeing,
A Newgate hornpipe some fine day;
With the mots (25), their ogles (26) throwing,
Tol lol, &c.
And old Cotton (27) humming his pray (28).

" ' With the mots their ogles throwing,
And old Cotton humming his pray;
And the fogle-hunters (29) doing,
Tol lol, &c.
Their morning fake (30) in the prigging lay.' "

(25) *Mots*—Girls. (26) *Ogles*—eyes.
(27) *Old Cotton*—the Ordinary of Newgate.
(28) *Humming his pray*—saying his prayers.
(29) *Fogle hunters*—pickpockets.
(30) *Morning fake*—morning thievery.

II.

Ten or a dozen 'cocks of the game'
On the prigging lay (1) to the flash-house (2) came,
Lushing blue ruin and heavy wet (3)
Till the darkey (4), when the downy (5) set.
All toddled (6), and began the hunt
For readers, tatlers, fogles, or blunt (7).

(1) Thieving. (2) House frequented by thieves and prostitutes.
(3) Drinking gin and porter. (4) Night. (5) Knowing.
(6) Went. (7) Pocket-books, watches, handkerchiefs, and money.

Whatever swag (8) we chance for to get,
All is fish what comes to net:
Mind your eye, and draw the yokel (9),
Don't disturb or use the folk ill.
Keep a look out, if the beaks (10) are nigh,
And cut your stick (11), before they're fly (12).

As I'vas a crossing St. James's Park
I met a swell, a well-togged (13) spark.
I stops a bit: then toddles quicker,
For I'd prigged his reader, drawn his ticker (14);
Then he calls—"Stop thief!" Thinks I, my master,
That's a hint to me to mizzle (15) faster.

When twelve bells chime the prigs (16) return,
And rap at the ken of Uncle ————:
Uncle open the door of your crib (17)
If you'd share the swag, or have one dib (18).
Quickly draw the bolt of your ken,
Or we'll not shell out a mag (19), old ——.

Then, says Uncle, says he to his blowen,
'Dy'e twig (20) these coves, my mot (21) so knowing?
Are they out and outers (22), deary?
Are they fogle-hunters, or cracksmen leary (23)?
Are they coves of the ken (24), d'ye know?
Shall I let 'em in, or tell 'em to go?

"Oh! I knows 'em now; hand over my breeches—
I always looks out for business—vich is
A reason vy a man should rouse
At any hour for the good of his house.

(8) Booty. (9) Rob the unguarded. (10) Officers.
(11) Run away. (12) Find it out. (13) Well dressed.
(14) Watch. (15) Run. (16) Thieves.
(17) House. (18) The least share. (19) Give you a halfpenny.
(20) Know. (21) Woman. (22) Celebrated characters.
(23) Daring burglars. (24) Frequenters of the house.

The top o'the morning, gemmen all,
And for vot you vants I begs you'll call."

But now the beaks were on the scent,
And watched by moonlight where we went;—
Stagged (25) us a toddling into the ken,
And were down (26) upon us all; and then
Who should I spy but the slap-up spark
What I eased of the swag in St. James's Park.

There's a time, says King Sol (27), to dance and sing;
I know there's a time for another thing:
There's a time to pipe and a time to snivel—
I wish all Charlies (28) and Beaks at the Devil:
For they grabbed (29) me on the prigging lay (30),
And I know I'm booked for Botny Bay (31).'

(25) Watched. (26) Surprised.
(27) King Solomon, we presume. (28) Watchmen.
(29) Seized. (30) Thieving. (31) Sentenced.

III.

"Happy the days vhen I vorked avay,
In my usual line in the prigging lay;
Making from this and that and t'other, . . .
A tidy living without no bother.
When my little crib vas stored vith swag,
And my cly vas (1) a vell-lined money bag,
Jolly vas I, for I feared no evil,
Funked (2) at nought, and pitched care to the devil.

"I had, beside my blunt, my blowen
'So gay, no nutty (3), and so knowing;'

(1) Pocket. (2) Feared. (3) Fond.

On the wery best of grub (4) we lived,
And sixpence a quartern for gin I gived:
My toggs (5) was the sporting'st blunt could buy,
And a slap up out and outer was I.
Vith my mot on my arm and my tile on my head,
That ere's a gemman every von said.

"A-coming avay from Wauxhall von night,
I cleared out a muzzy covey (6) quite;
He'd been a strutting avay like a king,
And on his digit (7) he sported a ring,
A di'mond sparkle, flash, and knowing,
Thinks I, I'll vatch the vay he's going,
And fleece my gemman neat and clever,
Or, at least, I'll try my best endeavour.

"A'ter the singing and fireworks vas ended,
I follows my gemman the vay he bended;
In a dark corner I trips up his heels,
Then for his tatler and reader I feels,
I pouches his blunt, and I draws his ring,
Prigged his buckles and every thing,
And saying, 'I thinks as you can't follow, man,'
I pikes me off to Ikey Solomon (8).

"Then it happened d'ye see that my mot,
Yellow (9) a-bit 'bout the swag I'd got,
Thinking that I should jeer and laugh,
Although I never tips no chaff (10),
Tries her hand at the downy trick,
And prigs in a shop, but precious quick
'Stop thief' vas the cry, and she vas taken,
I cuts and runs and saves my bacon.

(4) Victuals. (5) Clothes. (6) Half-tipsy gentleman.
(7) Finger. (8) A celebrated fence or receiver of stolen goods.
(9) Jealous. (10) Humbug.

" Then says he, says Sir Richard Birnie,
'I advise you to nose on your pals (11), and turn the
Snitch (12) on the gang, that'll be the best vay
To save your scrag (13).' Then, without delay,
He so prewailed on the treach'rous varmint (14)
That she vas noodled by the Bow-street sarmint(15).
Then the beaks they grabbed me and to pris'n I vas
dragg'd
And for fourteen years of my life I vas lagg'd (16).

" My mot must now be growing old,
And so am I, if the truth be told;
But the only vay to get on in the vorld,
Is to go vith the stream and however ve're twirled,
To bear all rubs: and ven ve suffer
To hope for the smooth ven ve feels the rougher,
Though very hard, I confess it appears,
To be lagged, for a lark (17), for fourteen years."

(11) Impeach your accomplices. (12) Confess. (13) Neck.
(14) *Slangice* for vermin. (15) Sermon.
(16) Transported. (17) Bit of fun.

We also append the French version of the galley-slaves' complaint, the translation (only) of which appeared in Vol. I. p. 129. (See Vol. I.)

" La chaîne,
C'est la grêle;
Mais c'est égal,
C'a n'fait pas de mal.

" Nos habits sont écarlate,
Nous portons au lieu d'chapeaux
Des bonnets et point d'cravatte,
C'à fait brosse pour les jabots.

Nous aurions tort de nous plaindre,
Nous sommes des enfants gâtés,
Et c'est crainte de nous perdre
Que l'on nous tient enchaînés.

" Nous f'rons des belles ouvrages
En paille ainsi qu'en cocos,
Dont nous ferons étalage
Sans qu'nos boutiques pay' d'impôts.
Ceux qui visit'nt le bagne
N' s'en vont jamais sans acheter,
Avec ce produit d' l'aubaine
Nous nous arrosons l'gosier.

. . . . . .

Quand vient l'heur' de s'bourrer l'ventre,
En avant les haricots !
Cà n'est pas bon, mais çà entre
Tout comm' le meilleur fricot.
Notr' guignon eût été pire,
Si, comm' des jolis cadets,
On nous eût fait *raccourcire*
A l'abbaye d' Mont-à-r'gret (1).

(1) The guillotine.

SEQUEL.

THERE is a peculiarity respecting these Memoirs now laid before the Public which entirely distinguishes them from the preceding Autobiographies of this series. M. Vidocq is still living, and we thus are compelled to falsify that portion of our general title-page which promises to the reader a "compendious Sequel, carrying on the narrative to the death of each writer." We do not expect, however, that this will in any way detract from the interest of the work; on the contrary, the wild and wonderful with which it abounds will have an additional charm; for the reader who knows that the hero of so many an "accident by flood and field" is still living,—that he who has escaped from dangers dire and perilous,—who has been preserved miraculously from the steel of the bravo and the revenge of those whose hands are always ready to compass the machinations of their heads, has escaped with life;—it will rather add to than diminish from the attractions of the Memoirs.

To those who may assert their disbelief of the personal deeds and perils of Vidocq, we suggest this plain fact,—none of them have been contradicted, and yet there are those existing whose wish and interest it would be to prove their falsity. We therefore assume their verity as incontrovertible.

After his resignation of office, at the termination of Villele's ministry, M. Vidocq was succeeded by Coco-Lacour, who had been one of his band. Coco, as we learn from unquestionable authority, had been from his

earliest days a professed and expert thief, and, we presume, was promoted to his present station on the strength of the old proverb, "*set a thief to catch a thief.*" Now Vidocq has not used very measured terms in his mention of Coco, and were his statements impeachable, it is not probable that Lacour would have allowed them to pass unnoticed. But it is not our province or intention to enter into a discussion of the veracity of Vidocq's Memoirs: be they true or false, were they purely fiction from the first chapter to the last, they would, from fertility of invention, knowledge of human nature, and ease of style, rank only second to the novels of Le Sage. The two first volumes are perhaps more replete with interest, because the hero is the leading actor in every scene; but in the subsequent portions, when he gives the narrative of others, we cannot but admire the power and graphic talent of the author. Serjeant Bellerose is scarcely inferior to the Serjeant Kite of Farquhar; and the episodes of Court and Raoul, in the third volume, and that of Adèle d'Escars, in the fourth, are surpassed in description, depth of feeling and pathos, by no work of romance with which we are acquainted.

Since the commencement of these Memoirs, M. Vidocq has given up his paper manufactory at St. Mandé, and has been subsequently confined in Sainte Pelagie for debt. His embarrassments are stated to have arisen from a passion for gambling, a propensity which, once indulged, takes deep root in the human mind; and few indeed, lamentably few, are those who can effectually eradicate the fatal passion. Vidocq, who could assume all shapes like a second Proteus, who underwent bitter hardships, and unsparingly jeopardised his life at any time, could not resist the fell temptation which has brought him to distress and a prison.

It must be painful to one, whose peace of mind seems

so greatly to depend on the enjoyment of freedom, and all whose exertions and success resulted from an anxiety to secure his liberty, to be immured in a gaol. To himself it must be a galling chain, to his enemies an important triumph. The Dalilah has at length appeared who could reduce Sampson's strength to weakness; the locks have been shorn; he has succumbed beneath the power of the Philistines. Poor human nature!

It has been stated in some of the Journals that Vidocq has a son named Julius, who was condemned to the gallies, and when liberated was employed by his father at St. Mandé. This must be another bitter in life's cup, which Vidocq seems condemned to drain to the very dregs.

At the end of the Second Volume we were told by the autobiographer, that we were to have ample information on all points connected with the police of France; he was to untwist all the "hidden links" of the system, so effectually carried into action, and whereby, as he tells us, he has rendered Paris the safest residence in the world.

He thus continues—

"I will display to the glare of noon-day, the faults of our criminal informations, and the still greater errors of our penal code, so absurd in many of its enactments. I will ask for alterations, revisions, and what I ask will be conceded; because reason, come from where she may, is always sooner or later understood. I will offer important ameliorations in the regulations of prisons and bagnes; and as I compassionate more deeply than another can, the sufferings of my old companions in misery, condemned or pardoned, I will probe the wound to the bottom; and shall, perhaps, be the happy man, who will offer to a philanthropic legislator, the only remedies which it is possible to apply, and which alone will not be temporising but effective. In delineations as varied as novel, I will give the original traits of many classes of society, destitute

as yet of all civilization, or rather which have emanated from her, and infest her, attended by all that is hideous and infamous!"

Vidocq continues in this strain from page 260 of vol. II. to the end of that volume; and yet, how far has he performed this promise? He has given us a nomenclature of the assassins, thieves, and swindlers of France, and no more. He has interspersed the list with brief anecdotes and trite advice; he has told us nothing with which we were not previously acquainted, as far as concerns the modes adopted by miscreants of all denominations to attain their ends, whether by robbery only, or by plunder, wedded to murder.

Where are "his important ameliorations"? Where his "only remedies which it is possible to apply, and which alone will be not temporising, but effective"? Where his "institutions, to purify and regulate the manners of the people"? Where are his accounts "of all police now existing, from that of the Jesuit to that of the court; from the police of the *Bureau des Mœurs* to the diplomatic police"? Where is the show-up of all the wheel-work, great and small, of those machines, which are always in motion? Where is the "developement of all those things (and more), without disguise, without fear, without temper"? Where, we ask, are all these details,—all these revelations,—all this information,—all this counsel"?—And Echo answers—"Where?"

Sieur Eugene-François Vidocq, you are weighed in the scale of your own erection, and are found wanting! And do your omissions, repressions, result from fear?—We believe not. Do they result from incapability, from incompetency to undertake, from inadequacy to fulfil your promised task?—We believe not. Was it that you were compelled to silence by the powers that be? Was it that you wished to puff your work into a more extensive sale?

Was it that, in durance vile, when cash ran low, and necessities high,—when pocket and stomach both were empty, that "your poverty and not your will consented" to refrain from making those disclosures, which you had pledged yourself to the public at large that you would make? Vidocq! was an offer made you, and did you sell yourself? We ask these questions, because we think we are entitled to an explanation. "We pause for a reply."

That Vidocq made all these promises is no less true than that he has falsified his word. Were it not that the fourth volume is published as the '*Quatrième et dernier tome*,' we might have been led to believe that the work would have been extended beyond the limit originally assigned. We are unwilling to judge uncharitably, but it is not improbable that Vidocq has had his lips locked by a golden padlock, or his successor, Coco-Lacour, may have had sufficient interest to have compelled the omission of certain portions of the promised intelligence.

We learn, too, that Vidocq has had some dispute with his publisher, Tenon, and may, therefore, wilfully withhold the information and explanation to which he was pledged. The fourth volume terminates very abruptly, and in a mode entirely contrary to Vidocq's usual style, he being somewhat addicted to digression. It may be possible that he has written this last volume to complete his original agreement with the publisher, and may give us, at some future period, the detailed accounts of all he promised.

In the narratives interwoven in the third volume, the critical reader will not fail to detect a spinning out of the subject, a prolongation of the theme into minutiæ, which, though exemplary of the accurate observation of the writer, are yet somewhat too much in detail, losing in power what they gain in length. In the episode of Adèle d'Escars, trifling circumstances are given with a precision

which must emanate from the Author's imagination, and induces us to think we are reading a well-devised tale of fiction rather than the facts of real life, describing trials and temptations that are of actual occurrence.

It would seem as though much of the original matter had been repressed, and these indications of tediousness are the results of an obligation on the Author to comply with his agreement with his publisher, who, in his bargain, should have added *quality* as well as *quantity*. Be this as it may, there are redeeming points in the work which must always make it a work of original and attractive merit, and one that will continue to be read and wondered at, and wondered at and read, when many of the ephemeral and trashy memoirs of the same period are forgotten.

It affords for the lovers of romance all that the wildest taste could desire of hair-breadth 'scapes, imminent dangers, and powerful description; for the amateurs of fun, there are sketches as comic as humour could devise; and for the philosopher, who looks and scrutinizes into the workings of the mind and the strength or weakness of humanity, there is food enough for reflection and speculation.

We have been compelled occasionally to prune down pruriencies offensive to English taste when considered (as we consider it) synonymous with decency and decorum. A greater latitude both of action and expression is allowed, nay encouraged, amongst our *politer* French neighbours, who relish a *double entendre* and have a zest for an indecent simile, or obscene allusion. We are not sticklers, and have the same opinion, to a certain extent, that Dean Swift had when he said that "a nice man was a man of nasty ideas;" but there is a line of demarcation which cannot be too strongly drawn between inoffensive pleasantry and coarse ribaldry, or indelicate allusion; and we

trust that the increasing progress of knowledge and diffusion of information, whilst they encourage literature, will also tend to an universal reprobation of anything that trenches on the bounds of propriety, or encourages wit at the expense of decency.

The true object of literature is not to pander to bad passions, encourage gross taste, or cater to prurient imagination; but to correct evil propensities by excellent example, to warn by precept, to instruct whilst it delights, and to call into action all those better feelings in the heart of man which tend to his individual happiness, and have weight and moral influence on the well-being of a nation.

H. T. R.

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THE END.

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